THE NATIONAL INTEREST

Owen Harries
on
Pat's World

Where Are We Going?

America's Grand Strategy
James Kurth

The Future of a Contradiction
Robert W. Tucker

Less is More
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Distant Compassion
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The World Shakes China
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Policing the Caribbean
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Russia's Student Generation
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Essays & Comments:
Matthew Connelly, Adam Garfinkle, Paul Gigot, Herb Greer, Steven Katz, John Kleeberg, Charles Lichenstein, Laurie Mylroie, William Perl, Daniel Pipes, Michael Roskin and Hasan Ünal

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America's Grand Strategy

A Pattern of History

James Kurth

IN RECENT YEARS, there have been many proposals about what should be the future direction, even the grand strategy, of American foreign policy. Among them have been the enlargement of democracy or the market, the containment of Islamic fundamentalism or Chinese expansionism, and the protection of human rights or the global ecology. In recent years, too, American foreign policy in practice seems to have been a matter of frantically dashing around the world, engaging in a new confrontation or intervention every six months or so. During the Clinton administration alone, the United States has been successively engaged with Somalia, Haiti, North Korea, Bosnia, and China. And with every confrontation, the speculations and debates about the direction of U.S. foreign policy begin anew.

This article will make some such proposals of its own. It will argue, however, that the course of American foreign policy in the future has already been largely set by its legacy from the past. In most respects, the grand strategy of the United States has already been composed by the historical tradition and trajectory of American foreign policy and by the peculiar strengths and weaknesses of the American nation.

The United States has experienced three great cycles in its foreign policy. The first two cycles were each about eighty years in length, and we now are about fifty years into what appears to be the third.

Each cycle commenced with a decisive victory by the United States in its epic war of the century—the Revolutionary War in the eighteenth century, the Civil War in the nineteenth, and the Second World War in the twentieth. From each war and victory, America drew lessons that would define and drive U.S. foreign policy for the next several decades. In the course of these decades, the United States at times interpreted these lessons with wisdom and discernment to expand and consolidate the legacy from the great victory. The results were major successes, and great and lasting achievements.

At other times, the United States was driven by a misreading, even an idolatry, of the past achievements to go beyond what Clausewitz called "the culminating point of victory" and to engage in what Paul Kennedy has termed "imperial overstretch." The results were major failures and damaging disasters. From these failures, the United States then drew new lessons, which became the basis for a more discerning and more focused version of the national project of expansion and consolidation. And from the disasters, it drew new and even deeper lessons that then became the basis for the next great victory and the beginning of the next great cycle.

We are now in the 1990s and near the end of the third cycle. At the equivalent phase in the previous two cycles, the United States had recently experienced a major success in

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its foreign policy (i.e., the Mexican War, the First World War), but it had then entered into a time of division and disorientation that, in the end, issued in disaster (the Civil War, the Great Depression, and the onset of the Second World War). After its great success in the Cold War, the challenge for U.S. foreign policy in our own time is to rise above this fatal pattern from the past.

The First Cycle: Territorial Annexation

AFTER THE achievement of its independence in the Revolutionary War, the new American nation focused its foreign policy upon the goal of expansion across the North American continent. The strategy—territorial annexation—was obvious and simple, but American tactics were often extremely subtle, even by the standards of the long-experienced powers of Europe.

There were grand achievements in this national project of continental expansion, especially the Louisiana Purchase, which was accomplished through the extraordinary diplomatic virtuosity of the Jefferson administration, but also the southwestern annexations, which were achieved later on through U.S. military victory in the Mexican War. In the former case, the United States took advantage of the fact that the greatest European powers, Britain and France, were then engaged in their own epic war against each other. In the latter, the United States similarly took advantage of the fact that Britain and France were disrupted by serious internal turmoil. But it was also crucial that the arenas of expansion did not contain modern and organized societies equivalent to the United States and that the U.S. expansion did not directly threaten the vital interests of any great power.

The situation was different in regard to the U.S. effort to carry its project of continental expansion into Canada, and this resulted in one of the two major failures of the first cycle, the way that the United States fought the War of 1812. In 1812, the United States thought that it was continuing its great national enterprise by its invasion of Canada. As British North America, this was a major pillar and vital interest of the empire that the British had reconstructed after the loss of their thirteen American colonies, but the United States thought that Britain would be distracted by its continuing war with France. This proved a grave miscalculation. Canada was an organized society comparable to the United States and capable of offering stout resistance, and with Napoleon's defeat in Russia the British were fully able to deploy enough military forces to put the American experiment in mortal danger (and in 1814 to put Washington to the torch).

But the gravest failure of the first cycle occurred in the aftermath of the Mexican War, when the national project of continental expansion mutated into the two competing sectional projects—Northern and Southern—of the expansion of liberty and the expansion of slavery. In the late 1850s the United States was torn, as Britain and France had been in the late 1840s, by serious internal division, which in the American case even went to the fundamental question of national identity. In this context, the preceding territorial annexations became vital stakes in an escalating conflict between two sections, even two nations. This was one of the fundamental causes of the greatest disaster in American history, the Civil War.

The Second Cycle: The Regional Sphere

AFTER THE ACHIEVEMENT of reunion in the Civil War, the renewed American nation again focused its foreign policy upon the goal of expansion—now really consolidation—across the North American continent. In fulfilling this great national project, the United States experienced almost unalloyed success. But this focus and this success were based upon some lessons learned from the previous failures. Now the United States drove straight westward, turning away from annexations of terri-

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tories to the south and to the north, which were either populated by peoples of a different culture (the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Mexico) or protected by a great power (Canada).

When in the 1890s the United States neared the completion of its national project of continental expansion ("the closing of the frontier" then observed by Frederick Jackson Turner), the obvious question was what kind of national project would come next. The equally obvious, and simple, answer was more territorial annexations beyond the continent, even further to the west (e.g., Hawaii, the Philippines, and beyond) and even to the south (e.g., Cuba, Puerto Rico, and beyond). The subtle, and ultimately more sound, answer was to create a new and different mode of expansion that better suited both these new arenas and the character of the United States itself, i.e., to replace the strategy of territorial annexation with the strategy of a regional sphere of influence.

The new arenas to the west and to the south of the continental United States had much larger and denser populations than had the territories gained through the Louisiana Purchase and the Mexican War. But unlike Canada, their societies were less modern and organized than that of the United States. It would be difficult to annex and troublesome to rule such peoples, but easy to influence them. A regional sphere of influence was accordingly the suitable strategy. Further, a good number of the territories in these new arenas were not part of the empire of a European great power, but merely remnants of the empire of a decrepit Spain or, as nominally independent countries, part of no empire at all. This meant that the European great powers had no vital interest in these territories. But because of their proximity to the United States as an emerging great power, the United States could easily persuade the European powers that it did have a vital interest in them. This asymmetry between a U.S. vital interest and the absence of a European one in most of the Caribbean and Central America meant that the United States could easily establish a sphere of interest in that region and have it accepted as legitimate by the European great powers.

After its victory in the Spanish-American War, the United States thus established a secure sphere of influence and interest in the Caribbean and Central America. This was the second major success of U.S. foreign policy in the second cycle. It went beyond the first success of continental consolidation, not only geographically but conceptually, by creating a new strategy of expansion.

At the same time, however, the United States made major errors resulting in problems that would only be fully revealed decades later. The annexation of the Philippines immediately gave rise to the costly Philippine Insurrection and eventually contributed to the long-term conflict with Japan. The quasi-annexation of Cuba eventually resulted in Castro's revolution and Cuba's alliance with the Soviet Union.

In short, the grand national project of expansion and consolidation continued in the second cycle, but certain distinctions now became important for the national strategy. Expansion through annexation had reached its natural limit with the end of continental expansion westward and the closing of the traditional frontier. The further annexations westward and southward were at best anomalous and unassimilable. As for annexations northward, these were out of the question, ruled out by the consistent opposition of the Canadians and by the vital interests of the British Empire.

Instead, expansion would now take place through the projection of influence and interests, specifically with the construction of a regional sphere of influence. This became the American strategy in the Caribbean and Central America in the 1900s-1910s and in Latin America more generally in the 1920s-1930s. But in this cycle the United States only cast its sphere of influence over societies that were culturally different from itself and much less economically developed.

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And it only cast it over one region, which was an immediate neighbor.

The United States was now a great power, and when a Great War broke out between the European great powers, the United States also became involved. The U.S. participation in the First World War was crucial in breaking the stalemate on the Western Front and tipping the balance in favor of beleaguered France and Britain. The results were the decisive defeat of Germany and Austria-Hungary, and the apparent triumph of the American ideals of democracy and self-determination.

However, in terms of the pattern of U.S. foreign policy, there was little connection between the U.S. victory in Europe in 1918 and the national projects of the previous one hundred and thirty years. There was no way for the United States to engage in territorial annexations on the European continent, as it had on the American continent. There was even no way for the United States to construct a regional sphere of influence in Europe, as it had in the Caribbean and Central America. The U.S. strategy for Europe would have to be a new invention, not a familiar tradition.

President Woodrow Wilson, of course, had a conception of such an invention. His proposals for the League of Nations and for an American security guarantee to France and Britain were novel by U.S. standards. Later, some American business leaders had another conception of such an invention—the Dawes Plan of 1924, to finance the recovery of the German economy. These were embryonic versions of a new mode of expansion and consolidation, one based upon American leadership in international organizations and the international economy, rather than upon regional spheres of influence or territorial annexations.

Although grand in their conceptions, the U.S. foreign policy elite was committing the error that is fatal to any grand strategy. It was going beyond the domestic base that would be necessary to support it, one of the ways of engaging in imperial outstretch. For most Americans in the 1920s, this new strategy—with its international scope and its innovative methods—required too great a stretch beyond the old and familiar strategies. The connections with American traditions were not clear enough—and with American interests not broad enough—to sustain it. The collapse of the new strategy and the return to earlier strategies on a continental or regional scale were, as is well known, basic causes of the Great Depression, of German and Japanese aggression, and finally of the Second World War. The division and disorientation in U.S. foreign policy that followed upon the U.S. victory in the First World War, like the earlier division and disorientation that followed upon the U.S. victory in the Mexican War, brought about a new great disaster.

The Third Cycle: International Order

AFTER THE ACHIEVEMENT of its great victory over Germany and Japan in the Second World War, the United States was once again ready to focus its foreign policy upon the goal of expansion, this time on a truly international scale. It had learned fundamental lessons from the great disasters of the recent past. From the Great Depression, it learned that the massive American economy—the leading industrial economy in the world—could only prosper in an open international economy, even one that included its recent enemies, Germany and Japan. From the Second World War, it learned that its own American continent and regional sphere could only be secure if no single great power dominated the European continent, or, more broadly, the Eurasian land-mass. The strategy to achieve these goals would now be the most sophisticated of all—American design and leadership of new international organizations, which in turn would institutionalize the opening of the international economy and the containing of any potential European or Eurasian hegemon.

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There were grand achievements indeed in this national project of international expansion. It was not the United Nations, where American leadership was often checked by Soviet vetoes, that best represented these achievements, but the international organizations that helped to restore and open the international economy, especially the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (the "Bretton Woods system"). Further, when the United States had to solve the problem of European security, it created the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to contain the Soviet threat, and it added to this the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) to help implement its economic aid program (the Marshall Plan).

In NATO and the OEEC, the United States combined its concept of international organizations with its earlier concept of the regional sphere of influence. Indeed, in its leadership of Western Europe, the United States perfected the regional sphere of influence to the point of including nations that were modern and organized, and not merely underdeveloped, and that were located at a remote distance, and not merely in the immediate neighborhood.

These achievements marked the "heroic age" of American foreign policy. For the rest of their lives, the men who participated in them would be proud to have been "present at the creation." But there would soon be major failures in this third cycle as well. As it happened, each involved a violation of the central norm of a regional sphere of influence, the very strategy at which the United States had been so successful in the second cycle.

The first major failure of the third cycle occurred early in the Korean War. The error was not entering the war to defend South Korea; this was necessary for the defense of Japan, which was a central pillar and vital interest of the emerging American international order. Nor was it crossing the 38th Parallel to punish North Korea; this may have been necessary to deter aggression in the future. Nor was it refusing to extend the war into China *after* the Chinese intervened in Korea. The error was carrying the war with North Korea to the point of eliminating it as a political entity and bringing U.S. troops to the border of China itself.

By eliminating China's own Korean buffer state, the American advance to the Yalu violated the central norm of any neighboring regional sphere of influence, be it the traditional Chinese order in East Asia or the modern American sphere in the Caribbean. The cost of this violation was a dramatic American defeat inflicted by the Chinese armies in the winter of 1950-1 and two years of military stalemate until the armistice agreement of 1953 provided China and America each with their own Korean buffer state.

The second major failure in this cycle involved Cuba and was a violation of a sphere-of-influence norm in the opposite direction. The causes of Fidel Castro's revolution in Cuba are still a matter of debate. (My own view is that it largely resulted from years of intrusive American involvement that went beyond what was appropriate for a sphere of influence.) The consequences, however, were extremely dangerous.

When Cuba defected from the American sphere of influence into a Soviet alliance, and when the United States allowed Cuba to get away with it following the Bay of Pigs fiasco, this also violated the central norm of a neighboring sphere of influence. This violation of international expectations led the Soviets into grave miscalculations—the Cuban Missile Crisis—which had the potential (President Kennedy himself put the chances as between one in three and one in two) to issue in a nuclear war and the greatest disaster in world history.

The third major failure of this cycle was the Vietnam War. From the Korean War the United States had correctly learned the lesson not to threaten the existence of a Chinese

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buffer state, which in this new war was North Vietnam. But this imposed major limitations on the ways that the U.S. military traditionally operated, which used the American advantages in mass and mobility to isolate and destroy the enemy's army. The U.S. military was not allowed to exploit these advantages against North Vietnam, and it was not able to isolate the enemy in South Vietnam, given that country's peculiar geography. The limitations on carrying the land war into the North in effect made the Vietnam War unwinnable. In a sense, the most important battle of the Vietnam War had actually been fought and lost at the Yalu, more than fifteen years before.

Under such conditions, the U.S. error in Vietnam was to undertake military intervention in the first place. The far better course would have been to use the different Asian communist states, especially China and a united Vietnam, to contain each other (as indeed subsequently happened as early as 1979). In short, the great failure, even disaster, of the Vietnam War would never have occurred if the United States had better understood and integrated the concepts of the regional sphere of influence and the regional balance of power.

Indeed, less than twenty years after the U.S. political defeat in Vietnam, communist Vietnam was doing everything it could to enter into the American-led open international economy. In some ways, the war that the United States had once lost by an aberrant military strategy had now been won by its global economic strategy. Indeed, in this sense the really decisive battle of the Vietnam War had actually been fought and won at Bretton Woods in 1944.

The causes of the ultimate victory of the United States over the Soviet Union in the Cold War were many, and they have received thorough and illuminating discussion, as readers of *The National Interest* are especially advantaged to know. It is clear, however, that among the central causes were the dynamism of the open international economy, the inability of the Soviet system to cope with this, and the pressures that this put upon the Soviet leadership to change—and ultimately to abandon—that system.

The U.S. victory in the Cold War certainly brought an era to an end. But it is not so clear that it brought the third cycle in U.S. foreign policy to an end. Rather, it may have initiated that cycle's most dangerous phase.

It is possible that, after its victory in the Cold War, the United States can now look forward to successes and achievements comparable to those after the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, and the Second World War. More ominously, however, the United States could experience failures comparable to those suffered after the Mexican War and the First World War. To grasp the promise of the first and to avoid the perils of the second, the United States must construct a foreign policy that draws upon certain enduring positive features of past U.S. strategies, while transcending other equally enduring negative ones. These two kinds of features come into sharpest relief when the American strategic tradition is contrasted with that of two other great powers.

The British and German Traditions

THE AMERICAN TRADITION of grand strategy as it developed in the twentieth century may be usefully compared with the equivalent traditions of the European great powers. In particular, Britain and Germany represent two great and opposing national traditions of grand strategy.

The British strategic tradition was based upon Britain's position as an island off the European continent and its identity as a maritime power. As is well known, Britain sought to prevent a single land power from gaining hegemony over the continent. It did this by maintaining a balance of power in Europe and, when an expanding power threatened to gain hegemony, by organizing a coalition of other powers against it. Britain's chief instruments in implementing its balance-of-power

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strategy were the proficient diplomacy that organized its allies, the Royal Navy that protected them, and the financial subsidies that rewarded them.

Since Britain had a comparative disadvantage in land power, its use of its army was relatively modest. It was chiefly deployed to tip the balance or to provide a missing ingredient for the coalition of allied armies. Britain also preferred to deploy its army in peripheral theaters rather than on central fronts. This "indirect approach" was articulated by Basil Liddell-Hart between the two world wars and was put into practice by Winston Churchill in the midst of those two wars (e.g., Gallipoli in 1915, North Africa and Italy in 1942-3, and his proposal to invade the Balkans in 1944). But as Wellington's Peninsula Campaign against Napoleon exemplifies, it was established long before then.

The German strategic tradition was based upon Germany's position in the middle of the European continent (and in the middle of threatening great powers) and its identity as a land power. As is well known, Germany was peculiarly open to invasion from both east (usually from Russia) and west (usually from France). This threat wonderfully concentrated the minds of first Prussian and then German military leaders. They sought to prevent a single large power, or worse a coalition of them, from quickly invading and occupying vital and vulnerable German territories. Germany did this by maintaining a large standing army that could be rapidly deployed in either direction, by excelling in both the mass and the mobility of its land forces. This direct approach culminated in the Schlieffen Plan of the First World War and the blitzkrieg strategy of the Second.

It is obvious that the British condition led naturally to a major emphasis on diplomatic solutions, backed by a sophisticated array of naval and financial instruments, while the German condition led naturally to a major emphasis on military solutions, with much less proficiency in diplomacy and finance. Both powers had a tradition of grand strategy, but the British tradition was wider in its geographic scope, more varied in its use of instruments, and more patient in its sense of time. The British tradition often seemed subtle and sophisticated, while the German tradition often seemed simple and crude. In short, of the two traditions of grand strategy, the British was the grander and more successful.

When it became a great power in the twentieth century, the United States created a third national tradition of grand strategy, which was based upon America's position as its own continent separated by great oceans from both Europe and Asia. Since the beginning of the century, the United States has been both a maritime and a land power, and with the Second World War, it became an air power as well. As a maritime and a land power, the United States has combined central elements of the British and the German grand strategies. In many respects, then, the American strategy has been the grandest of all.

Like the British, the Americans have been proficient in the use of diplomacy to organize their allies, naval power to protect them, and economic aid to reward them. The great achievements of the third cycle of American foreign policy were in many ways variations (and improvements) on a British theme.

However, like the Germans, the Americans have also been proficient in the rapid deployment of large armies, excelling in both the mass and the mobility of their land forces. Indeed, some military analysts have seen this to be the distinctive feature of "the American way of war", with the origins of the American use of mass lying in the Civil War campaigns of Ulysses S. Grant and of mobility lying in those of Robert E. Lee.

The United States has demonstrated this proficiency on several occasions in the twentieth century, particularly in France in the last months of the First World War, in both the European and Pacific theaters in the Second World War, at Inchon during the Korean War, and in Iraq during the Gulf War. The

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strategies and successes of the American army on these occasions were equal or superior to those of the great campaigns of the German army. Conversely, there is no campaign of the British army in the twentieth century that comes close.

In contrast, however, the United States was not able to use the mass and the mobility of its land forces against the Chinese in the Korean War or against the North Vietnamese in the Vietnam War. The fact that the U.S. land forces could not deploy the strengths of "the American way of war" in these two land wars in Asia is a prime explanation for the American failures there. As we have seen, this fact grew out of the realities of the Chinese regional sphere of influence.

Finally, whereas both Britain and Germany were proficient in various high-technology weapons for their time, only the United States has excelled in the mass-production of them. This has been especially significant as the basis of the United States becoming the supreme air power.

However, the greatest strength of American grand strategy derives from its distinctive combination of elements from the British and German approaches. The United States deployed this distinctive combination in the Second World War against both Germany (especially coalition diplomacy, economic assistance, army mass and mobility, and high-technology weaponry) and Japan (especially economic warfare, naval mass and mobility, and high-technology weaponry). It deployed a version of it again in the Gulf War against Iraq (especially coalition diplomacy, economic sanctions, army mass and mobility, and high-technology weaponry).

The fact that the United States since 1947 has had—in the navy, army, and air force—three co-equal military services has often been bemoaned as resulting in inter-service rivalry, excessive competition, and wasteful duplication. This trinity of co-equal services also means, however, that each of the three strengths of the American geographical position is represented and institutionalized in a powerful and permanent bureaucracy.

Threats and the Concentrated Mind

IN CLARIFYING A GRAND strategy and in composing a political consensus to support it, it is extremely helpful for the political leadership to be able to identify one particular power as the principle adversary, to be able to wonderfully concentrate the national mind upon a visible foreign threat. As it happens, this has been a common feature of American foreign policy throughout its history.

For most of the period from the Revolutionary War until near the end of the nineteenth century, the United States viewed Britain as the principle foreign threat to its security and its interests. After the War of 1812, this sense of threat diminished over time, but it would occasionally be revived in this or that diplomatic crisis. The last major dispute raising the specter of armed conflict between the United States and Britain was probably the Venezuelan Crisis of 1895 in which Britain substantially yielded to the United States, acknowledging the emerging U.S. sphere of influence.

For most of the first half of the twentieth century, from the Spanish-American War until the end of the Second World War, the United States viewed Germany as its principle threat in Europe, the Atlantic and Latin America, and Japan as its principle threat in Asia and the Pacific. And of course for much of the second half of the twentieth century, from the end of the Second World War until the end of the Cold War, the United States viewed the Soviet Union as its principle threat throughout much of the world, even though it twice went to war against communist allies of the Soviets in Asia (North Korea, Communist China, and North Vietnam).

After the Second World War, the foreign threat to the United States seemed unusually clear. The Soviet Union displayed so many

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similarities to Nazi Germany (alien ideology, totalitarian dictatorship, closed economy, ambition to dominate the Eurasian land-mass, and a massive army) that it was easy to translate the comprehensible and familiar German threat into an equivalent Soviet one. In contrast, the foreign threat to the United States was not clearly defined after the Mexican War (it was variously seen as Britain, France, or, most often, no one), or after the First World War (Japan, Germany, Britain, or for a while, no one). It is no surprise that these periods with no clearly identified foreign threat were also periods of division and disorientation in U.S. foreign policy. And it is also perhaps no accident that these periods ended in great disasters.

A version of this problem arose even during the Cold War era. It was much easier to develop a political consensus about the threat if it could be seen as analogous to a previous one, as the Soviet Union was seen as analogous to Nazi Germany. It was not so obvious, however, that Communist China was analogous to Imperial Japan (or even to the Soviet Union). The groups and organizations that had seen Japan as the principle enemy in the 1930s and early 1940s (i.e., much of the Republican Party, the U.S. Navy) did see China as the new and analogous enemy in the late 1940s and 1950s. But other groups and organizations (i.e., much of the Democratic Party, the U.S. Army) never adopted this view with clarity and conviction. This meant that during the Cold War there was never as much consensus around U.S. policy toward China as there was around the policy toward the Soviet Union. This partly explains why the consensus in the Korean War ("the wrong war at the wrong place at the wrong time") was so weak and why a consensus in the Vietnam War, the most divisive foreign war in U.S. history, was weaker still and very short-lived.

The American way of grand strategy, then, has included a focus upon a particular foreign power, which has wonderfully concentrated the mind, and the energies, of the American nation. In this respect, the American way has been different from both the British way and the German way.

The British way of grand strategy was to focus upon a particular nation only insofar as it represented the current threat to the European balance of power. In Palmerston's words, Britain had neither permanent friends nor permanent enemies, only permanent interests. Conversely, the German way of grand strategy was to focus not on one particular country but on two (or more), usually France and Russia. In Bismarck's words, Germany was haunted by the nightmare of encirclement.

This feature of the American way of grand strategy has important and disturbing implications for the international challenges of our own time. Taken by itself, it would indicate that American strategy in the future will only be effective if it can once again focus upon a particular foreign threat, especially one that can be seen as analogous to the old Soviet one. As it happens, two current nominees for chief threat can appear to have this feature.

One analogue to past threats is Islamic fundamentalism. For those who stress alien ideologies as the main source of threats to the United States, Islamic fundamentalism has clear analogies with communism and Nazism. However, this does not impress those who see hostile great powers as the main source of threats (the "realist" position). They note that there is no Islamic great power, certainly not in the center of the Eurasian land mass and certainly not on the scale of Germany or the Soviet Union (or China). The closest candidates are Iran, whose military threat was contained by Iraq in their 1980-8 war, and Iraq, whose military threat was obliterated by the United States in the Persian Gulf War, and which is not even an example of Islamic fundamentalism. In any event, for great-power realists the problem of Islamic fundamentalism can be readily handled by the combination of a policy of dual containment and a policy of balance of power, i.e., by using Iran and Iraq to contain each other. It is unlikely, there-

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fore, that a political consensus will develop that Islamic fundamentalism is the central threat to the United States and that opposing it should be the organizing principle of U.S. grand strategy.

The other analogue to past threats is China. For those who stress hostile great powers as the main threat to the United States, China has clear analogies with the Soviet Union and with pre-1945 Germany. But there is no political consensus about the kind of ideological threat that China might pose. It no longer represents a coherent communism, having become more Market-Leninism than Marxist-Leninism. It is not yet a coherent Confucianism, as exemplified by Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew (the current Chinese version being pseudo-Confucianism, rather than neo-Confucianism). Nevertheless, there is emerging a strong view among some American groups that China is the central threat to the United States and that containment of it should be the organizing principle of U.S. grand strategy. But the analogies with previous threats will be incomplete, and the political consensus behind this view will be neither broad nor robust.

In short, it seems likely that the United States after the Cold War has entered into a period similar to the periods after the First World War and after the Mexican War, when for many Americans there seems to be not a single major threat but several lesser ones, and for even more Americans there seems to be no threat at all.

During the second half of the twentieth century, the Soviet Union posed a strong military threat to the United States, but it only briefly (in the 1950s) appeared to pose an economic one. Conversely, more recently Japan posed a strong economic threat but not a military one. During this era, the United States did not really have to confront a great power that could simultaneously pose both a military and an economic threat.

During the first half of the twentieth century, however, Germany did pose such a dual threat to the United States and to the international security and economic order more generally. The rapid rise after 1871 of German military and economic power first disrupted and eventually destroyed both the European balance of power and the European balance of trade. In doing so, it eventually drew the United States into the European war, for by 1917 it really was necessary to call in the New World to redress the new imbalance within the Old.

The great success of British grand strategy in the first half of the twentieth century was to recognize that Germany was the central, indeed the only, potentially fatal threat to Britain at that time. A related success was to guide the rapid rise of American naval and economic power, a rise equally rapid to that of Germany, into the path of supporting international order and stability. The great failure of British strategy, however, was not similarly to guide the rise of German power into this path. The results of that failure were the two greatest wars in history.

It is not easy to see, even now with the benefit of decades of hindsight, how Britain might better have addressed this problem. This is especially so since its attempt in the 1930s to do exactly this was the policy of appeasement. Still, it sometimes has been argued that the British error lay not so much in the idea of appeasement, but in its timing. The problem was that Britain used appeasement when it should have used containment (the 1930s), and it used containment when it should have used appeasement (the 1900s and perhaps the 1920s).

During the first half of the twenty-first century, it most likely will be China that will pose both a strong military and economic threat to the United States, and to the international security and economic order more generally. The rapid rise after 1976 of Chinese economic power and the recent modernization of Chinese military power together promise to disrupt both the Asian balance of trade and the Asian balance of power, just as Germany's rise disrupted the European balance after 1866.

The great challenge to American grand

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strategy in the first half of the twenty-first century will *not* be to recognize that China is the central threat to the United States. Given the natural analogies between the Soviet Union of the past and the China of the future, this will be all too easy—even facile—to do. Instead, the great challenge will be to guide the rise of Chinese power into the path of supporting international order and stability—that is, to do what Britain failed to do with Germany in the first decades of this century. This will require a supple synthesis of elements from three strategies that have been successful in the past: the international economy, the balance of power, and the regional sphere of influence.

As we have seen, understanding and managing the regional sphere of influence was a factor in the greatest failures of American foreign policy during the Cold War. Since it also is likely to be a source of major great-power confrontations in the future, we will discuss this in some detail.

Spheres of Influence

A CENTRAL PRINCIPLE of wise strategy is that a great power will seek a sphere of influence over neighboring small states, those that are in its "own backyard" or "near abroad." This is especially the case with emerging great powers and newly-industrial economies, like the United States a century ago and like China today. In diplomatic content, this will be a sphere of influence; in economic content, a sphere of interest; and in military content, a sphere of insulation.

The United States created such a sphere in the Caribbean and Central America at the beginning of the twentieth century. It did this so readily and with so little opposition from other great powers that Americans came to take their sphere almost for granted. However, U.S. policymakers worked hard at maintaining it, as evidenced by the occasional military interventions in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Panama; by the U.S. purchase of the Danish West Indies in 1917 as insurance against their becoming a base for Germany; and by the monumental conflicts and risks that resulted when Castro's Cuba escaped from the American sphere into a Soviet alliance.

Other great powers have sought their own spheres of influence too, but for them the circumstances normally have been less favorable and their achievement less secure. In the twentieth century, Britain established such a sphere in parts of the Middle East from the 1920s to the 1950s; Germany sought to create one in Southeast Europe in the 1930s; Japan similarly sought to do so in East and Southeast Asia in the late 1930s through the mid-1940s; and the Soviet Union established its huge sphere in Eastern Europe after the Second World War.

A great power will define the limits of its sphere according to its shifting perception of the diplomatic, economic, and military interests at stake. This might seem to result in inconsistency, confusion, and misunderstandings. In practice, however, the definition is usually rather obvious. Most experienced diplomats, area specialists, and scholarly experts have a quite clear and consistent sense of what a particular great power considers to be its necessary and legitimate sphere of influence. It is grounded in historical and cultural traditions, which persist throughout the ups and downs of power and the zigs and zags of interest.

Two powers are now intent upon restoring some version of their traditional spheres of influence, and, even though their situations are very different, each will continue in this intent for the foreseeable future. These are Russia and China.

For Russia, a cultural basis for a traditional sphere has been Eastern Orthodoxy, what Samuel Huntington has termed "Slavic-Orthodox civilization." Russia has permitted, even encouraged, Eastern Orthodox nations to be nominally-independent states. But apart from Greece during the Cold War, there is no historical case of Russia permitting an

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Orthodox nation to become an ally of a great-power adversary. There is nothing in the cultural or even intellectual tradition of Russia that could interpret such a development as stable or legitimate.

Even in the absence of cultural affinity, a pronounced geopolitical interest can provide a historical tradition (as the U.S. sphere in the Caribbean and Central America illustrates). For Russia, there has long been a geopolitical interest and thus historical basis in its near abroad or soft underbelly to the south, i.e., Transcaucasia and Central Asia. Russia systematically annexed these territories in the nineteenth century. In itself, this might suggest that it will strive to annex them again at a favorable time. It is just as likely, however, that Russia would continue to permit these nations to remain independent states, as long as they abide by the norms of a Russian sphere of influence.

For China, the cultural basis for its traditional sphere has been "the Chinese world order" or Confucian tributary system, what Huntington has termed "Confucian civilization." For imperial China, this meant Korea, Taiwan, northern Vietnam, and more vaguely the East China Sea and the South China Sea. It is evident that something like this realm is the concept of contemporary Chinese nationalism as well.

The normal pattern in spheres of influence is for the central power to be more advanced than the small countries in its sphere (e.g., the United States in Latin America, Russia in Central Asia). Indeed, it is this difference in development that gives a seemingly effortless strength to the great power's influence. However, the Soviet Union was less advanced than its East European satellites (as Czarist Russia had been less advanced than its Baltic and Polish territories). Similarly, China is less advanced than South Korea, Taiwan, and of course the "overseas" Chinese cities of Hong Kong and Singapore.

The normal pattern is also for the advanced core to transform the backward periphery, to remake its sphere in some sense in its own image. The experience of Czarist Russia and the Soviet Union, however, demonstrates that an advanced periphery can sometimes undermine or even transform a backward core, usually by being a funnel for still more advanced elements from the Western core. This is a likely result of the current and future relationship between the Chinese periphery and the Chinese core, i.e., between the overseas Chinese exemplified by Hong Kong and the hinterland Chinese exemplified by Beijing.

American Interests—Economic, Ethnic, and Ideal

ANY EFFECTIVE national strategy must be grounded in the long-term, concrete interests of organized groups. This is necessary to sustain the strategy through the ebbs and flows, the fads and fashions, of media attention in foreign affairs. In the United States, these interests have been economic, ethnic, and (a peculiarly American characteristic) ideal.

In this current era of the global economy, it has been frequently argued that the United States has economic interests in every part of the globe. While this is true in some abstract sense, there are enormous differences in the importance and weight of these interests in different regions. U.S. trade and investment are concentrated today, as they have been since the end of the Second World War, in four great regions: Europe, East and Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. There is much less trade and investment with Africa, South Asia, and Central Asia. Given the "failed states" and social violence in much of these latter regions, this low level of economic interests will continue for the next decade and more. The oil resources of Central Asia may appear to be an exception, but American exploitation of these will be greatly inhibited by political instability and Russia's opposition to encroachment on its sphere.

Similarly, in this era of the multicultural

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society, it has been frequently argued that the United States or at least particular Americans have ethnic interests throughout the world ("America as the world-nation"). This also is true in some abstract sense, but there are substantial differences in the emotive importance and political organization of these interests in different regions. There has been a decline in the ethnic identities of European Americans. Jewish Americans, however, maintain an identity with Israel and an interest in U.S. policies toward the Middle East. There has also been an increase in the foreign affairs interests of some African Americans and Latino Americans. The Black Congressional Caucus is a major influence shaping U.S. policy toward Africa and toward Haiti, and Cuban Americans are the major influence shaping U.S. policy toward Cuba. But these groups have not really constructed a broad national consensus to support their particular foreign policies. In any event, for most African Americans, Mexican Americans, and Asian Americans, foreign policy is not a salient arena for advancing their group interests. This low level of ethnic interests will continue for the next decade or more, and will not be pronounced enough to alter the prevailing regional pattern of U.S. economic interests.

Together, these considerations mean that American economic or ethnic interests will provide a solid basis for U.S. foreign policy only in respect to the traditional and familiar regions of Europe, East and Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. This does not augur well for the proposal that U.S. foreign policy should be diverted toward supporting certain "pivotal states." Among the states nominated for pivot status are Algeria, Pakistan, and South Africa. However pivotal these states might be in some abstract U.S. grand strategy, they are peripheral to the concrete interests of Americans.[1]

It is also often argued that the real national interests of the United States are its national ideals or ideology. Compared with most European nations, America in many respects is an artificial nation, not a natural one. Its national interests accordingly will often appear to be artificial, even "socially constructed." And its national ideals will often appear to be ideological, as with "the American Creed."

For much of the twentieth century, the national ideal of democracy has served as the least common denominator that has bridged disparate definitions of the national interests. In justifying U.S. involvement abroad, the ideal of democracy has almost always been necessary, but in itself it has never been sufficient. Democratic ideology provided the moral energy, while practical interests provided the specific direction, for U.S. military interventions.

During most of the century, the American democratic ideal was seen more in terms of majority rule than of minority rights. It thus tended more toward the older idea of self-determination rather than toward the more recent idea of human rights. It is important to observe that this idea of human rights, a creation largely of the past two decades, does not yet serve as a least common denominator for disparate interests. Rather, it is merely the ideal of particular groups whose agendas are really rather parochial. Most commonly, these are the liberal professionals and the professional liberals of the media and academia.

Russia and China: A Different Kind of Containment

DESPITE ALL ITS varied foreign involvements in the twentieth century, the central concerns and conflicts of the United States have been with a limited number—really a "big four"—of great power adversaries.

During the first half of the century,

[1]Robert S. Chase, Emily B. Hill, and Paul Kennedy, "Pivotal States and U.S. Strategy", *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 1996), pp. 33-51.

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Germany and Japan were the two adversaries, but, with its great victories in the Second World War and its great achievements in the third cycle, the United States transformed and tamed these aggressive military powers into productive "trading states." During the second half of the century, Russia (as the Soviet Union) and China (as the PRC) were, in different ways and at different times, the two adversaries. Each of them is still torn between a military and an economic vocation, although again in very different ways. (The Chinese show every evidence of having superb entrepreneurial abilities; the Russians show almost no evidence at all.)

For the first half of the twenty-first century, Russia and China will continue to be the central concerns because they could again generate the central conflicts facing American foreign policy. Russia is the only potential great-power threat to Europe, the first of the four arenas of American interests. To address this potential threat, the United States will need a potential policy of containment. This policy should only be potential or latent, however, ready to become effective if the necessity should again arise. Unless or until that happens, the actual or manifest U.S. policy toward Russia should continue to be a policy of engagement. Further, the U.S. definition of the area of containment should take into account Russia's definition of its regional spheres. It would be a case of containment overstretch to seek to deny Russia a sphere of influence in the Eastern Orthodox countries of Eastern Europe (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia) and in the "near abroad" of Transcaucasia and Central Asia.

The more complex challenge, however, involves the traditionally Catholic countries of Central Europe, which are really part of Western civilization. This is the issue of the enlargement of NATO.

A full and formal expansion of NATO into these countries would threaten Russia's conception of its vital security interests. A viable model for the future of Central and Eastern Europe may be found in the Cold War past of NATO's Northern Flank. In particular, the different security positions of Finland, Sweden, and Norway during the Cold War suggest some possibilities. Each of these three northern countries was politically independent of both superpowers during the Cold War, but their security positions were different. Finland was formally neutral, but it was within the Soviet security zone. Sweden was formally neutral, but maintained the military capability to defend its neutrality. Norway was formally a member of NATO, but it did not allow the stationing of NATO troops on its territory, as northern Norway bordered upon Soviet territory and vital security interests. Together, these three North European countries spanned an East-West continuum between the Soviet and the NATO security realms.

In the future, a similar East-West continuum might develop between the Russian and NATO security realms. Like Finland, Belarus and Ukraine could be politically independent and militarily neutral, but within the Russian security zone. Like Sweden, the Visegrad Four (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary) could be politically independent, culturally and economically pointed westward, and militarily neutral—although retaining a sufficiently robust armed neutrality to play a Sweden-like role. Like Norway, Germany is a member of NATO, but no NATO troops are stationed on that part of its territory closest to Russia—the part, that is, that formed the old East Germany.

An analogous analysis can be applied to China and its potential threat to East and Southeast Asia, the second arena of American interests. Here, too, the United States will need a potential policy of containment, ready to become effective if the necessity should arise. However, the actual or manifest U.S. policy toward China should continue to be a policy of engagement.

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Further, the U.S. definition of the area of containment should take into account China's definition of its regional sphere, which is more complicated than that of the Russians. Two countries are particularly likely to be the locus of Sino-American conflict: Taiwan and Korea.

Taiwan is currently the focus of a major dispute between the United States and China. In fact, however, the vital interests of each of the parties—the United States, China, and even Taiwan—could be preserved. The Chinese conception of Taiwan is that it is formally a part of China and that, in the fullness of time, this formality will become an actuality. The current transition in the status of Hong Kong is sometimes seen as a prototype. In the meantime, Taiwan should not do anything to put formal obstacles in the way of this "natural development." The most obvious obstacle is for Taiwan to gain international recognition as an independent state. Another is for Taiwan to establish a democratic political process that could lead to a declaration of independence from China. The Chinese seem willing—at least at present—to accept a Taiwan that is formally a part of China but really an independent economy. This is also congruent with the interests of Taiwanese businessmen, many of whom find their most promising business ventures on the mainland. It is also congruent with the interests of the United States, whose long-run hopes for China will most likely be achieved if Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Shanghai form a powerful commercial trinity working to transform the traditional bureaucratic authority. The United States is right to object to China's use of military force to achieve its objectives; it would also be prudent to resist any Taiwanese moves toward formal independence.

Korea is potentially another major dispute between the United States and China. There is the possibility that the two Koreas will be reunited, with the North dissolved into the South, as East Germany was dissolved into West Germany. The Chinese probably could accept this, but only if American troops were not stationed in northern Korea, as NATO troops are not stationed in eastern Germany. Indeed, the Chinese might prefer that U.S. troops remain in southern Korea, serving to vitiate a rationale for Japanese nuclearization.

Building upon the Three Legacies

EACH OF THE THREE cycles of American foreign policy offers a particular contribution to the history and the legacy of U.S. grand strategy—successively, territorial annexation, regional sphere of influence, and international order. Each strategy resulted in great and lasting national achievements. As it moved from one cycle and one set of challenges to the next, the United States managed to transcend the limitations of its earlier strategy and achievement and to undertake a major innovation. It is crucial to appreciate, however, that the United States never abandoned the earlier achievements, but rather built upon them. The American strategic process was characterized by innovation of the new and integration with the old. Thus, the foundation of the new great-power status and regional sphere of influence of the early twentieth century was the continental, consolidated nation-state inherited from the late nineteenth century. Similarly, the foundation of the new superpower status and American-led international order of the mid-twentieth century was both the regional and now hemispheric sphere of influence and the continental nation-state, a double inheritance. The future grand strategy of the United States will achieve its greatest success if it builds upon each of these three legacies and upon their associated lessons.

These legacies and lessons are progressively harder to understand the further that their origins lie in the past. The legacy and lessons of international order are the easiest to grasp; these are the most recent in time

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and the most regarded in the current foreign policy discourse. Virtually all political leaders, Democratic and Republican, agree on the proposition that the United States must be the leader in maintaining a stable international order, especially an open global economy.

These same leaders, however, have often neglected the reality that strong American leadership in the global economy requires a strong American economy within the United States itself. The foundation for American leadership in the Bretton Woods system, for the heroic age of American foreign policy, was the most productive and competitive industrial economy in the world, and the high employment, economic prosperity, and social cohesion that were the result. Without these, there would not have been the political consensus necessary to sustain American leadership.

Today the American economy is centered upon information and services—e.g. computers, telecommunications, internets—rather than upon industry. The United States may not have to be—and probably cannot be—any longer the most productive and competitive industrial economy in the world. That role will likely be assumed by one or more of the newly-industrial economies, with their "advantages of backwardness", i.e., the peculiar combination of high technology and high skills with low wages and low regulation.

The United States, however, will have to be the most productive and competitive information economy in the world. Further, this information economy will have to provide enough high employment, economic prosperity, and social cohesion within the United States itself to form the base for a political consensus to sustain American leadership. This is not the direction of the American information economy or the wider global economy today, which are instead accentuating and accelerating economic, social, and political divisions among the American people.

Boss of All the Bosses

THE LEGACY AND LESSONS of the regional sphere of influence are harder to grasp. Because the United States has been so successful in maintaining its original sphere in the Caribbean and Central America (and now even the exception of Cuba seems likely one day to return to the fold) and its sophisticated sphere in Western Europe, it often takes regional spheres and their realities for granted. This can be dangerous, for while five of the great powers that dominated the twentieth century will also dominate the first decades of the twenty-first (the United States, Russia, China, Germany, and Japan), their conceptions of spheres of influence will be quite different.

Germany and Japan are fully modern or even post-modern societies. They will have a regional sphere of economic interest in Central Europe and in East Asia respectively, but it is by no means inevitable that they will seek to develop these areas into regional spheres of military insulation and intervention. In contrast, Russia and China are still modernizing societies. They will seek a full sphere of influence in those regions where they have had one historically. Neither militarily slight nor institutionally pre-modern, only one power, the United States, can lead an international order and guide the other four great powers to support it. For this to happen, the United States must understand and accept the vital interests of these powers.

Only the United States is a credible leader of the international order, but other great powers have their own neighboring regions, and they can be credible leaders of their respective regional spheres. The temptation for the United States is to presume that the goal of international order means the prevention of regional spheres (except for our own). A version of this notion in regard to China led to disaster in Korea in 1950 and, in a different way, in Vietnam in

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1965. If the United States pursues this overstretched notion with China or Russia in the future, it will lead to disaster again.

Rather, the task for the United States is to guide China and Russia into shaping their spheres in ways similar to those that the United States followed in its own spheres. The American spheres were closed to the military presence of other great powers but open to the commercial transactions of the international economy. Although the Americans were in a position of economic advantage, the economies of the spheres were open to the process of competition and change. This should be the U.S. objective in regard to the Chinese and the Russian spheres. As we have observed, some of the peripheries of the spheres have the economic potential to transform the politics of the core. The task of the United States is to be the motor and monitor for the international order and the model and mentor for the regional spheres of influence. In short, it is to be the global hegemon of the regional hegemons, the boss of all the bosses.

Remaking One's Self

THE LEGACY AND LESSONS of territorial annexation and consolidation are the hardest of all to grasp. Because this happened so long ago and because the United States was successful for so long in maintaining its continental consolidation and national unity, it has taken these achievements even more for granted. As we have noted, however, America is an artificial nation, not a natural one, a nation that has been "socially constructed", not organically grown. America must also be socially reconstructed periodically. Otherwise, it will cease to be a nation.

The generations of Americans from the 1770s to the 1840s achieved great successes in territorial expansion, but the generation of the 1850s threw these away when it divided over slavery and sectionalism. These divisions were only overcome with the Civil War. The generations of Americans from the 1860s to the 1890s achieved great successes in territorial consolidation, but the generation of the 1900s-1910s undermined these with policies that promoted class polarization, massive immigration, and conflicts among "hyphenated Americans." These divisions were overcome eventually with the economic policies of the New Deal, cultural programs of Americanization, and the unity that came out of the Second World War. The generations from the 1940s to the 1960s achieved great successes in further consolidation of the American nation. But the generation of the 1980s-1990s has undermined these gains with its own reckless economic and cultural policies.

Economically, national consolidation is being undermined by an unbalanced pursuit of the global economy, putting at risk "the promise of American life" for a majority of Americans. Culturally, it is being undermined by uncontrolled immigration (especially from neighbors in the original regional sphere) and by the ideology of multiculturalism, putting at risk the *e pluribus unum* of the American nation as a whole. These divisions will have to be healed with a new New Deal and an Americanization project, ones suited to the specific conditions of our time. Otherwise we may degenerate into a new civil war, this time not a "War between the States" but more a war of all against all.

Over the course of two centuries, the United States developed its own distinctive grand strategy, and over the course of three historical cycles this strategy became progressively more grand. Indeed, by the end of the Cold War, it had become the grandest strategy of any power of the twentieth century and probably of the modern era. American strategy could continue on this upward trajectory into the twenty-first century, but there are growing signs that it may not do so. At its deepest foundations, the grand strategy of the United States has always required that the United States itself be united. □

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The Future of a Contradiction

Robert W. Tucker

THE GREAT ISSUE of American foreign policy today may be simply stated. It is the contradiction between the persisting desire to remain the premier global power and an ever deepening aversion to bear the costs of this position. Evidence of the contradiction is pervasive. In Bosnia, it has merely found its most recent manifestation.

The contradiction itself is hardly novel. Many observers have traced its appearance to the experience in Vietnam. In fact, it goes back to a much earlier time in this century, for its origins are to be found in the period of World War I. In this respect, as in so much of our twentieth-century experience with the world, Woodrow Wilson is the dominant figure. It is Wilson who aspired, as no American president before him had done, to a role of world leadership for the United States. If we were ever to become partners in the world, he declared in urging the nation to strike out on a new course, our assured role would be that of "senior partner." To America would presumably fall the position of premier global power, were it only to abandon its past and commit itself to his League of Nations.

Yet it is also Woodrow Wilson who shrank from acknowledging and accepting the costs of playing such a role. America's leadership was to be gained, he was persuaded, at very little sacrifice on the nation's part. It had only to make, as he had made, a commitment of faith. The still prevalent view that Wilson failed in the end because he asked too much of the nation is quite misleading. Wilson failed despite the fact that he asked so little while promising so much.

In its origins, then, the contradiction that still besets us was resolved simply by the nation's rejection of its terms. In the interwar period, the American people neither claimed the role of world leadership nor evidenced any willingness to bear the costs of such role. Historians, it is true, often speak of an "interwar compromise" that involved a break from America's pre-World War I past yet did not embrace what was to be its post-World War II future. But that compromise, whatever else it might have meant, did not extend to a guarantee of European security. Nor, for that matter, did it extend to a reliable guarantee of Pacific security, despite the undertakings entered into regarding sea power at the 1922 Washington Conference. The fierceness of the prolonged struggle over intervention that occurred in the years 1939-41 is persuasive testimony of the nation's deep reluctance to accept a role the costs of which had by then become increasingly apparent.

Nor did this reluctance disappear with America's intervention in World War II. That America would henceforth play a leading role in world politics was now generally accepted. Yet the consequences thereby

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entailed were far from being generally accepted during the war years and even less so in the immediate postwar years—as the very rapid demobilization and the abrupt ending of the Lend-Lease arrangement testified. It was not until the close of the 1940s, when the Cold War was fully joined, that things changed and these consequences found widespread acceptance.

The Cold War Experience

THE PERIOD FROM the Korean War to Vietnam appears as an exception to the contradiction that has since come to resemble virtually a chronic state of affairs. In these years of the classic Cold War, the disjunction between our pretensions to such a large role and our willingness to accept the costs of such pretensions was relatively narrow. But the favorable circumstances that permitted this state of affairs were unusual and, as such, unlikely to find approximation in any future that may be reasonably foreseen. The obvious advantages conferred by the relative power position that the United States enjoyed in this earlier period cannot be restored. Beyond restoration as well, it would seem, is the pre-Vietnam domestic consensus on foreign policy, which rested on a generally shared understanding that the executive was the ultimate authority in determining when a threat to vital interests, justifying the use of force, had arisen. Deference to the judgment of the president was perhaps the critical feature of the old Cold War consensus; on its basis the post-World War II security structure had largely been built. Until Vietnam, that structure also rested on a notion of sacrifice that was given operational meaning by the same institution—the presidency—that enjoyed the deference of public and Congress in deciding on critical issues of policy. Even when these factors are taken into account, it is well to recall that between 1953 and 1965 the cost in blood of a global position was virtually nil.

It is sufficient merely to recall these circumstances in order to be reminded how far we have since moved from them. While the decline in America's economic position has been emphasized almost to an excess, the erosion of the socio-political base that once sustained America's global role has been equally, if not even more, significant. In the quarter of a century or so since the breakdown of the old consensus began, there has been no real check to a trend that has led to an ever increasing disparity between ends and means in foreign policy. In the last decade of the Cold War, Ronald Reagan did not succeed in substantially altering, let alone reversing, this trend. To have done so would have required reconstituting the socio-political base of foreign policy, a task he made no real effort to accomplish. The foreign policy goals to which Reagan dedicated his administration, though themselves ambitious, did not imply a return to anything like the pre-Vietnam consensus. On the whole, Reagan respected the constraints on presidential power that had emerged in the years following Vietnam and instead sought to reconcile an ambitious foreign policy to those constraints.

In this attempt, the Reagan administration enjoyed a limited success. A public outlook emerged that once again viewed the use of American power with neither suspicion nor guilt. While this was no small achievement, the change was still not to be confused with the earlier Cold War consensus. The divisions that had arisen since Vietnam over what justified the use of the nation's military power were not overcome. Nor did there emerge during the Reagan years a disposition to accord the president the deference formerly shown him in foreign policy. The vaunted consensus of the classic Cold War remained a thing of the past, as did the notion of sacrifice that undergirded it. Far from attempting to recapture this spirit, Mr. Reagan's foreign policy message—like his economic message—was that sacrifice was unnecessary and that the nation might aspire

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to great ends without having to endure arduous means. This, as already noted, had been Woodrow Wilson's message as well. But whereas Wilson had urged it on behalf of a foreign policy that ended in failure, Reagan employed it in support of a foreign policy that met with considerable—some would say, spectacular—success.

Thus the victorious ending of the Cold War did not signal a lessening of the central contradiction. If the security measures a post-Cold War world requires of the premier global power have become more modest, so too has the willingness to support those measures. At the outset of the new era, the Gulf War was seen by many to indicate otherwise. The successful war, it was generally believed, would rid us once and for all of the legacy of Vietnam and, by doing so, remove the constraints on the use of military power Vietnam had given rise to. On the morrow of victory in the Gulf, an exultant President Bush declared that the "specter of Vietnam has been buried forever in the desert sands of the Arabian peninsula" and that the nation had "kicked the Vietnam syndrome once and for all."

More Than Ineptitude

THIS JUDGMENT has not been borne out. Instead, the events of the past five years point to the conclusion that the specter initially presumed buried in the Arabian peninsula remains very much with us. In the mid-1990s, the credibility of American power appears no greater than it did a decade earlier. If anything, it appears rather less credible. The now familiar constraints on the use of force seem as firmly in place as ever. While both Somalia and, to a degree, Haiti testify to this, Bosnia provides the most striking evidence. In the intense debate the Balkan war evoked, the participants, with few exceptions, shared one conviction: an unwillingness to bear any but the most modest costs to influence the outcome of the conflict. This characterized the interventionist position almost as much as it did the non-interventionist one, and it did so despite the former's insistence on the great interests at stake in Bosnia. From its outset, the debate over Bosnia was marked on the interventionist side by a disjunction between interests avowed and costs rejected.

The debate apart, it is generally acknowledged that at the outset of its tenure the Clinton administration demonstrated a remarkable ineptitude in its handling of the Balkan crisis. Until the summer of 1994, it insisted on supporting objectives in Bosnia that bore little if any relationship to the measures it was prepared to take on behalf of those objectives. The barren result of this disparity between ends and means was altogether predictable. At the same time, and while faulting the administration for its Bosnian policy, it is necessary to recognize that the roots of that policy cannot simply be traced to Mr. Clinton's inability to appreciate the interests at stake in the Balkan war, let alone to his reluctance to cast aside campaign promises. In his support of objectives in Bosnia, the all too likely costs of which he was clearly unwilling to bear, the president simply embraced, though with a vengeance, the contradiction that has increasingly come to define the nation's foreign policy. While committing the nation to ambitious ends, he refused to commit it to any but the most modest means. The result was bound to issue in failure.

Yet, there is little reason to believe that Clinton's two immediate Republican predecessors, had they been in his position, would have pursued an essentially different course. True, they might not have carried the contradiction to the lengths Mr. Clinton did before bowing to the inevitable, as the president has now apparently done. Still, the difference, it seems safe to surmise, would have been no more than a difference in degree rather than in substantive result. Neither Ronald Reagan nor George Bush could have been expected to ignore the possible consequences the Balkan conflict poses for the

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nation that still considers itself the ultimate guarantor of international order and stability. But neither could have been expected to support the means that the rejection of some form of territorial compromise and the defeat of the Serbs would have entailed. Certainly, there is nothing in Ronald Reagan's diplomatic record that argues for a different expectation. The Gulf War notwithstanding, the same must be said of George Bush. Indeed, the Balkan policy of the Bush administration in 1992 would appear almost to dictate this conclusion.

The contradiction between desire and unwillingness to accept desire's costs transcends the diplomacy of particular administrations. It can be expected to mark the diplomacy of any administration we are likely to have. The belief in America's exceptionality notwithstanding, this nation cannot be expected to do what no nation before it in a similar position has done and voluntarily relinquish a position of pre-eminent power. It cannot be expected to do so if only for the same reasons that other nations before it have not done so. The satisfactions of being an order-giving power have not disappeared even if the compensations of playing such a role have diminished. As a nation, we have become much more accustomed to the role of order-giver than our traditional ideology permits acknowledging. Having played this role for almost a half century, and with what must be judged a considerable measure of success, it is not surprising that there is little real demand or inclination to abandon the role now just because the circumstances which gave rise to it are a matter of the past. Given the expansive idea of order entertained by the nation, the justification for holding to the position of presiding global power cannot prove difficult in a world that remains ridden by conflict and violence.

At the same time, there are no apparent grounds for assuming a much greater willingness to pay the price in blood and treasure for a role that will not be abandoned. In the long generation since the end of the Vietnam War, the American nation's military forces suffered casualties that can be counted in no more than the hundreds. This is a remarkably modest price when measured by the past experience of leading world powers, America included. The apparent result of so fortunate a recent record, however, has been to accentuate the public's aversion to bearing the costs that normally attend the use of military power. The Gulf War, it is true, gave rise to a momentary expectation that a way had been found to avoid these costs. But this expectation has subsequently been qualified by the more considered appreciation that the circumstances attending that conflict were quite unusual. In retrospect, the experience of the Gulf War does not appear to have had a lasting effect either in altering the public's willingness to employ force or in sustaining its confidence that force may be effectively employed at minimal cost in circumstances other than those which marked the Gulf crisis.

To sum up: As far as one can see, the foreign policy of the United States will continue to be characterized by the disjunction between our pretensions to an order-giving role and our unwillingness to accept the costs of such a role. A world devoid of conflict and violence might lead us to abandon that role, just as a world in which we are once again seriously and directly threatened—as we were twice before in this century—might lead us to accept costs we now shrink from accepting. But since neither of these prospects appears at all likely, we may reckon on the persistence of a contradiction that at best may be moderated but that is not going to be resolved.

A Failure to Adapt

EVEN MODERATING the contradiction must prove difficult enough, given the changes this will require. For any moderation must imply that the ends of foreign policy become more modest while the means of policy become less so. And since the constraints on the means are probably

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not subject to much change, it is in the ends and aspirations of policy that greater adjustment will have to be made. That adjustment, in turn, must prove inseparable from what can only be termed a dispositional change. If the ends of policy are to be scaled down significantly, we will have to entertain a more modest vision of international order and of our role in that order than we have entertained in the past and continue to entertain today.

In the course of the Cold War, an expansive conception of international order had considerable justification. Though it led on more than one occasion to excess, that conception corresponded to the nature of the prolonged contest with the Soviet Union. The pervasiveness alone of the great conflict, and the stakes for which it was presumably waged, made the encompassing vision of order virtually unavoidable. In victory, however, it did not seem unreasonable to expect a change in outlook. The half century of great power challenge had presumably come to an end. This being so, an adjustment to a more modest concept of order, and of America's role in that order, seemed appropriate.

This did not in fact happen. Instead, a concept of order in many respects even more expansive than the earlier one appeared to take hold. It did so at the outset of the new era. The "new world order" proclaimed by George Bush responded to the threat posed not by a great power but by middle or small developing powers. In the wake of the Gulf War, the principal threat to global order was seen in the prospect of future Iraqs—lawless, renegade states in possession of modern weapons, including those capable of mass destruction, and dedicated to the pursuit of aggressive, even terrorist, ends. If allowed to go unchecked, it was urged, these states might well come to represent for the post-Cold War world the functional equivalent of the great power threat of an earlier world. The new world order over which America would henceforth preside was to be directed not only to repelling conventional "acts of aggression" but to preventing weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of aggressive and expansionist states. These ambitious goals were to be achieved through a novel emphasis on the United Nations. The Gulf War had presumably shown that the permanent members of the Security Council, under America's leadership, could now effectively cooperate to make collective security a reality.

The new world order thus joined a distinctive conception of the nature of international order with the assumption of America's leadership. An expansive vision of order soon became the object of criticism, however, not only because in practice it was applied selectively but because it was still considered by many critics to be too restrictive in its claims. For the Bush administration did not respond to aggression regardless of interest; it would not in fact guarantee the territorial integrity and political independence of *all* states. Nor did its new order address the prospect of threats to order that had their origins in the disintegration of multi-ethnic states, as a result of conflicting claims to self-determination. It was only the order of the political-territorial status quo to which attention was directed.

The succeeding Clinton administration did not reject the pretensions of the new world order; it simply added to those pretensions a list of its own. The Bush administration, it was alleged, had neglected human rights and the cause of democratic government. It had been indifferent to humanitarian claims. The proponents of the new world order had not even made good on the principle of opposing aggression. The new administration promised to correct these shortcomings. Its vision of order left little to be desired.

Until quite recently, then, a steady expansion of the principles of order to which we were presumably committed has marked post-Cold War U.S. foreign policy. And since this expansion was not attended by a willingness to provide the means necessary to

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vindicate principle, what soon became apparent was something that arose very early in the nation's history. We may term it the Jefferson Complex, and it consists in the refusal either to compromise one's principles or to fight for them. As such, it describes a policy that cannot be maintained for long without risking the steady loss of prestige and courting disaster. The Clinton administration, after a season of growing impotence, has belatedly recognized this. Unwilling to bear the burden of unilateral measures where allies have been reluctant, or have simply refused, to support its policies, this administration has been forced to choose between a course of relative inaction, with its confession of impotence, and one requiring a compromise of principle. Almost invariably, it has chosen to compromise, Bosnia providing the most instructive case. But it has done so reluctantly, for it still holds to its expansive vision of order.

Dragons and Snakes

IT IS THIS vision that we must break from if we are to achieve a sustainable foreign policy in the period ahead. The change cannot but prove very difficult, for it will require the recognition that we cannot effectively address the many sources and forms of conflict and disorder that are bound to characterize the world of the future. Almost fifty years ago, at the outset of the Cold War, Walter Lippmann wrote of our "refusal to recognize, to admit, to take as the premise of our thinking, the fact that rivalry and strife and conflict among states, communities, and factions are the normal conditions of mankind. . . . In the American ideology the struggle for existence, and the rivalry for advantages, are held to be wrong, abnormal and transitory. . . ."

Despite a half century of "rivalry and strife and conflict", the outlook Lippmann described apparently continues to hold us in thrall. How else to account for the widespread disillusionment that the aftermath of the Cold War has been attended by resurgent nationalism, ethnic strife, civil war, conventional aggression, and humanitarian crises? In the terms of a current metaphor, expressive of this disillusionment, the dragon has been slain but we now live in a jungle filled with a bewildering variety of poisonous snakes. It is the great dragons, however, that are nearly always seriously dangerous, while the snakes, though poisonous, are only occasionally so. Although there may be more poisonous snakes today than before, the issue they must raise for American foreign policy is not their very existence but the nature and kinds of threats their existence holds out for us. At least this is the issue unless we are ready to undertake a campaign against virtually any and all manner of poisonous snakes, and this we are plainly not prepared to do. Fortunately, there is no compelling reason for doing so even if the will to undertake such campaign were there.

A more modest concept of the requirements of international order appears indispensable if the contradiction that increasingly characterizes the nation's foreign policy is to be moderated. If it is said that this is a prescription for a declining power, the response must be that this is indeed the case. The deepening of the contradiction is itself persuasive evidence of this. The relevant issue today is not whether our position is declining but how the decline may be best arrested. A more modest set of aspirations respecting international order must form one part of the answer.

The other part must address the means of policy. It was earlier remarked that the means of policy are probably not subject to much change. If this is so, there appears to be no alternative to invoking the greater cooperation of others, even for the purpose of maintaining a more modest system of international order. But the greater cooperation of others, chiefly our principal allies of the past half century in Europe and Asia, will in turn require a greater degree of compromise than even the necessities of the Cold

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War imposed. The multilateralism of the future, though still a function of American leadership, promises to be quite different from that of the recent past.

Again, Bosnia appears to be a signpost to what we may expect. In the absence of American leadership, our European allies proved unable to act together to impose a settlement of the Balkan conflict. This much is generally recognized. What is less widely appreciated—or, at any rate, acknowledged—is that an essential condition of American leadership has been a substantial modification of the terms of peace Washington had earlier insisted upon. The formal terms of the Dayton accord notwithstanding, the United States government may well have presided over the territorial division of Bosnia. In moderating its previous insistence on preserving the internal political unity and territorial integrity of Bosnia, the Clinton administration moved much closer to the British and French position. It did so in other respects as well. No doubt, America's belated assumption of leadership was made possible by yet other developments, developments that suddenly and dramatically weakened the Bosnian Serb position, and in the absence of which the administration might well have once again backed away from playing an effective role in promoting a settlement of the conflict. But the willingness to compromise principle and position has clearly been an indispensable condition for the exercise of American leadership at a price the administration was eventually willing to pay.

While these considerations have been developed primarily with Europe in mind, they may prove to have still greater relevance for Asia. The dilemmas of policy that have required the compromise of principle and position are no less apparent there. Indeed, it may be argued that in Asia these dilemmas are likely to be more acute, since it is in Asia that the ultimate exposure of the contradiction between ends averred and means available will come in the form of a great power confrontation. A classic great power challenge is now in the making there, a result of the rise of China. It is that crude fact which is the nerve root of the growing confrontation between China and the United States, rather than the various familiar issues around which the relationship ostensibly turns. And it is that same crude fact that must ever more insistently raise the question: Are we prepared to move out of the way of a China that shows every sign of being bent on expansion? If not, then in the absence of a willingness to bear the burden of blocking Chinese expansion with our resources, we must look for reliable support from others. But the prospects of multilateralism in Asia are not the same as in Europe. In Asia much more than in Europe we have had clients rather than allies. This being so, the choices that sooner or later must be made there are likely to be all the more painful.

As a critical element of American foreign policy in the post-Cold War world, multilateralism, though seemingly inevitable, promises to be a difficult experience. The multilateralism of the Cold War years was more nearly a qualified unilateralism. The point has often been made that the American diplomatic experience has differed from the experience of other states in that the nation has never had to entertain genuinely cooperative action with other nations. In moving from a relative isolation to global engagement, we did not go from unilateralism to multilateralism but from the unilateralism of a position of isolation to the unilateralism of a position of undisputed leadership over a global alliance. This is not to say that the more recent unilateralism was without any of the constraints real multilateralism must imply, only that the constraints imposed by our allies still left us with a very considerable freedom of action. Ironically, the nation that has more insistently than any other called for observance of the principle of equality has seldom, if ever, experienced the practical meaning of this principle.

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It may at long last be forced to do so, at least to a greater extent than has so far been the case. It may be forced to do so—again, ironically enough—in order to preserve an unequal position of premier global power. That this prospect should meet with resistance is altogether understandable. Quite apart from a past that has not prepared us for the compromises and constraints of multilateralism, victory in the Cold War appeared for a time to promise a quite different prospect. The Gulf War, with its remarkable fusion of unilateralism in substance and multilateralism in form, seemed to confirm this expectation. But the events of recent years have not borne out earlier hopes. The Gulf War is no longer seen as the first act of a new era but the last act of an old era.

For the time being, advocates of a policy of greater unilateralism will continue to find a receptive audience. The continued appeal of what was once termed "the policy of the free hand" should occasion little surprise. To be able to retain independence of action is always desirable. While it is central to the isolationist disposition, the desire to keep complete control over one's destiny transcends isolationism. Acting with others—multilateralism—is seldom without difficulty and pain. Ends may be compromised beyond the point of justifying the costs expended on their behalf.

Acting alone, however, also has its drawbacks and they can be very considerable. The point is regularly made that unilateral action can seldom, if ever, possess the legitimacy that multilateral action may enjoy. Though at times carried to an excess—the just after all may act alone and the unjust may join forces—the point has evident merit, being no more than a recognition that the force of self-interest is likely to prove greater when a nation acts alone than when it must take the views and interests of others into account.

The issue of legitimacy apart, it is of course the greater costs in blood and treasure that constitute the principal drawbacks of a unilateralist policy. It is one of the anomalies of the current dialogue over foreign policy that many who insist upon retaining our premier position in the world through an increasing reliance on unilateral measures are equally insistent on ever greater economy in foreign policy. This is presumably the meaning of Newt Gingrich's declaration: "I am a hawk, but a cheap hawk." Mr. Gingrich has expressed an aspiration, not a solution. The aspiration, itself close to a contradiction, perfectly mirrors the contradiction that continues to beset the nation's foreign policy. □

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The World Shakes China

Bruce Cumings

> "One might trace the history of the *limits*, of those obscure actions, necessarily forgotten as soon as they are performed, whereby a civilization casts aside something it regards as alien. Throughout its history, this moat which it digs around itself, this no man's land by which it preserves its isolation, is just as characteristic as its positive values." —Michel Foucault

IN THE RECENT ITALIAN film *Il Postino*, the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda teaches an uneducated mailman first the word and then the art of *metaforé*. The mailman is a quick study, and soon he is asking Neruda an intriguing question: "Is the world perhaps a metaphor for something else?" Neruda pauses and then says that he will have to think about this question. But he never gives the postman his answer.

China has not been a nation for Americans, but a metaphor. To say "China" is instantly to call up a string of metaphors giving us the history of Sino-American relations, and fifty years of "China watching" by our politicians, pundits, and academics: unchanging China, cyclical China, the inscrutable Forbidden City, boxes within boxes, the open door, sick man of Asia, the good earth, agrarian reformers, China shakes the world, who lost China, containment or liberation, brainwashing, Quemoy and Matsu, the little red book, ping-pong diplomacy, the week that changed the world, the China card, the gang of four, the four modernizations, China as insatiable market, Tiananmen, butchers of Beijing, China shakes the world (again), cycles of rise and decline (again), unchanging China (yet again).[1] Beyond all that, our pundits and experts remain captured by a master metaphor: that of China's unfathomable-in-a-lifetime vastness, its historical depth and profundity, and (therefore) its overriding importance to the world we live in.[2]

The accompaniment to this operatic "China" din is a cacophony of expert opinion offering "scenarios" for where China is going, and what we must (by all means) do about it. Pick up almost any journal or magazine of expert opinion and you will read that China is disintegrating, or that it is united and stable; that Sino-American relations are frayed to the breaking point, or that they are just over yet another nettlesome hump; that fearsome China must be "contained", or that outward-opening China must be "engaged"; that its military is growing ominously, or that it is underfunded and fitted out with obsolescent weaponry; that its commerce is drastically overheated and facing crisis, or that it is in great shape; that China may attack Taiwan, or that Taiwan may soon be China's biggest foreign investor; that China may take over the Spratly Islands, or that it will not because it cannot; that China will subjugate Hong Kong after it is no longer a British colony in 1997, or that Hong Kong has been colonizing China for years; that a budding civil society was crushed at Tiananmen, or that the protesters themselves did not know what they

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were doing, or wanted; that post-Deng China will dissolve into chaos, or that a new leadership will pluralize China's politics.[3] Atavistic China seems to be lying in wait for the next trough in history's recurring cycle—or not, as the case may be.

Contrast all this with George F. Kennan's sober remark back in the 1940s, around the time that Mao mounted the Gate of Heavenly Peace (i.e., Tiananmen) to found the People's Republic: "China doesn't matter very much. It's not very important. It's never going to be powerful."[4] China had no integrated industrial base, which Kennan thought basic to any serious capacity for warfare, merely an industrial fringe stitched along its coasts by the imperial powers; thus China should not be included in the containment strategy. Japan did have such a base, and was therefore the key to postwar American policy in East Asia.

Such clear-eyed thinking, informed by a shrewd realpolitik, is a better place to start than with the chorus of alarms and diversions always surrounding the China issue. If we can think realistically about where China has been, maybe we can make better judgments about where it is going. That begins with recognition that China has yet to shake the world; its external influence has been comparatively inconsequential since the industrial revolution. Instead, it is the world that has shaken China.

Castle and Moat

FOUCAULT'S METAPHOR gives us culture as a feudal castle protected by a moat of ingrained practices, habitual choices, and unconscious rejections through which the heterodox and the alien are kept at bay or subdued. It might be taken as a restatement of the reigning metaphor for Chinese civilization: dignified, aloof, self-contained, content with itself, always ready to reject the barbarian—or, if it must succumb temporarily, to dissolve the foreigner in the absorbent sea of Chinese custom and practice. For centuries this fate awaited the Mongols, the Manchus, and according to many accounts, the Westerners.

The Chinese "castle", however, was an empire encompassing for its occupants the known universe, and its "moat" delimited civilization itself. Two hundred years ago King George III of England sent a mission to the Chinese court, asking for the opening of trade relations. The Qianlong Emperor replied:

> Swaying the four seas, I have but one goal, which is to establish perfect governance; strange jewels and precious objects do not interest me . . . the virtue and prestige of the celestial dynasty have spread far and wide, the kings of the myriad nations come by land and sea with all sorts of precious things. Consequently there is nothing we lack. . . .

Alas, there was all too much that China "lacked." Modern history began for China when the British banged on its door and when, in C.P. Fitzgerald's perfect metaphor, "to the amazement of all, within and without, the great structure . . . suddenly collapsed, leaving the surprised Europeans still holding the door handle."

A structure that could hold together the entirety of China was not put together again until the country had experienced a century and a half of debilitation, rebellion, central collapse, and disintegration, followed by false starts, blind alleys, civil and international wars, and an immense social revolution. When Mao announced atop Tiananmen in 1949 that "China has stood up", he stirred the hearts of Chinese everywhere, for at least China was again unitary, the humiliation had stopped, and the foreigner had been expelled. But, that done, China again pulled up the ramparts and closed itself off against the Western challenge, only to fall behind once more. It adopted the modern world's only significant alternative to industrial capitalism, namely communism, and imagined that in so doing it was leaping ahead of the decadent West—only to fall behind. In the 1960s it closed itself off from *both* the Soviets and the West in the name of "self-reliance", and fell even further behind. The only untried strategy was to join up with the

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West, as Japan had done after 1868; which meant falling in well behind Japan, a former tributary.

In the 1980s Chinese intellectuals were able for the first time in decades to travel to the West and to appreciate the wealth, power, and civic order of societies long caricatured as capitalist nightmares; meanwhile the very leaders who had penned the caricatures were now looking to the West for a way out of China's developmental impasse. Thus even the one remaining achievement of the Chinese revolution, the re-establishment of national dignity and pride, seemed a mere illusion. "No foreigner can understand the depth of our pain", a respected intellectual told a visiting American.[5]

In all these encounters, spanning two centuries, we can appreciate the alpha and the omega of China's relationship to the modern world. Standing at the center of the only world it knew, supremely self-confident of the inherent superiority of its own civilization, China has still not overcome the humiliation of encountering a West that prevailed against all Chinese stratagems. It was not for want of trying.

Three Strategies

THE 1950s PRODUCED some classic metaphors for Sino-American relations but no contact, other than the bloody Korean War, which made mutual accommodation impossible for a generation. Before that war, Harry Truman's secretary of state, Dean Acheson, attempted to construct a different policy, one that Richard Nixon—Acheson's antagonist in the 1950s—was to fulfill only in the 1970s.

That policy was to recognize communist China, as a means of weaning it away from Moscow and bringing it into the world economy, thus rendering it dependent on the West. Acheson, like George Kennan, thought that Moscow could not really do much to rehabilitate and industrialize China; sooner or later it would have to turn to the West for help. An Anglophile and an internationalist, Acheson wanted to work with Britain to keep China open, in the hope that this would divide Beijing and Moscow, and ultimately scatter China's insurgent impulses in the solvent of free trade. The way to do that was to try to stay on the good side of Chinese anti-imperial nationalism, and hope to enmesh China in the world economy. The direct confrontation of the United States and China in the Korean War killed that hope for two decades. It also committed the United States to maintaining the separation of Taiwan from the mainland, a separation that continues to this day.

This early 1950s history shaped China's development strategy profoundly. In essence, three broad conceptions of political economy, each with a foreign policy corollary, have animated post-1949 China. All have had the goal on which all Chinese nationalists could agree: to foster China's wealth and power. All have had the stunning and unnerving aspect of requiring thorough change abruptly initiated from the top, first by Mao and then by Deng. And all have sought to contend with the same circumstance that the Qianlong Emperor faced: a vibrant world economy, led first by England and then by America.

Orthodox Stalinist industrial policy defined the first phase in the 1950s, something that was perhaps inevitable but that was deeply reinforced by mutual U.S.-Chinese hostility and American blockade: extensive, heavy industrial development, taking steel as "the key link", with the foreign policy corollary that China "leaned to one side" in the bipolar Cold War conflict. Mao emphasized China's relative backwardness and its "late" industrialization in world time. Buoyed by China's strong growth in the mid-1950s, he launched the Great Leap Forward to catch up with England in fifteen years. Instead he caught up with a profound economic crisis, compounded by the deaths through famine of millions of peasants. The foreign policy corollary of the 1950s program also collapsed, as the Sino-Soviet split deepened and China found itself under threat by both Washington and Moscow. But as a book widely circulated in China last year pointed out, Mao's agrarian policies and institutions

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also worked to root China's vast peasantry to the soil for thirty years. Rather than being allowed to flood the into the cities, as they were doing in most Third World countries (and as they now do in today's China), they were kept in place and indoctrinated to believe they were "making revolution."[6]

No statement captures the reasoning behind China's next dramatic departure better than Mao's judgment, made in 1961, on Nikita Khrushchev's doctrine of peaceful coexistence and competition with capitalism: "This is changing two de facto world markets into two economic systems inside a unified world market." That is, while China's lean-to-one-side policy had been predicated on withdrawal from the capitalist market system and the building of an alternative socialist system—one in conflict with and seeking to replace the capitalist one—Soviet revisionism was now effectively giving up this struggle. What little was left of Stalin's alternative system, moreover, was corrupt, fostered dependency, and had lost its original *raison d'être*. And, of course, a unified world market, led by the United States, remained as strong as ever.

If this critique of Moscow's revisionism was valid, China was now faced with a choice: It could either go it alone through a self-reliant strategy, or join the world market on the best terms it could get. Broadly speaking, China was to choose the first course in the mid and late 1960s, and the second course from the late 1970s up to the present. Both choices assumed a single world economy, but the first spelled withdrawal from it while the second implied enmeshment.

The self-reliant strategy of the 1960s was pre-eminently and uniquely a Maoist political economy—drawing upon mass mobilization, moral or ideological incentives, with "class struggle" as the key link. Its domestic expression was the Cultural Revolution, and its foreign policy corollary was solidarity with the Third World. Class struggle turned out to mean intense political infighting at the top, and growing chaos, violence, and alienation everywhere else. A certain nadir was reached in 1971 when Mao's "chosen successor", Lin Biao, sought to flee to Russia after a failed coup attempt, only to be shot down. After that, few Chinese could believe anything the central regime said, and the dictatorial elite did not know what it was doing.

In that same year that Lin Biao was killed, Nixon and Kissinger opened relations with China, seeking to reinforce Sino-Soviet differences and thus to use communism to contain communism. It was a grand diplomatic success, and soon Sino-American relations warmed to the brink of strategic alliance. In December 1975 Deng Xiaoping welcomed Gerald and Betty Ford to a sumptuous dinner in the Great Hall of the People. With maotai glasses held high, they heard Deng offer this toast to the presidential party:

> There is great disorder under heaven and the situation is excellent. . . . The factors for war and revolution are increasing. Countries want independence, nations want liberation, and people want revolution. . . . The wind in the bell tower heralds a storm in the mountains.

But what Deng might really have wanted to say was this:

> There is great disorder under heaven and the situation is terrible. The factors for war are decreasing and those for revolution, nonexistent. Countries want interdependence, nations want wealth, and people hate revolution. The wind in the bell tower heralds a catastrophe in China.

The Man Who Loved Croissants

WITHIN TEN MONTHS of President Ford's visit Mao would die and his mandate would end, events that were appropriately accompanied by China's most destructive earthquake of the century. Slowly, gradually, all the metaphors with which we had come to understand the Chinese revolution were now reversed: Mao, it turned out, had not been the titan who brought revolution,

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national unity, and egalitarian prosperity to "the sick man of Asia", but a murderous despot to be ranked with Hitler and Stalin—except that he also liked to molest little girls. China's intellectuals were not the effete scholar-officials who had delivered their nation to nineteenth-century imperialism—let alone the "stinking ninth category" abused by Mao's wife, Jiang Qing—but the new hope for an incipient civil society, the green shoots emerging after a revolutionary nightmare. And Deng was not the "capitalist-roader" renegade who had notoriously said it didn't matter if a cat was yellow or black as long as it caught the rat, but a bridge-playing, soccer-loving family man who had developed a taste for croissants when he lived for five years in France as a youth (having, by one account, been shown by a certain Ho Chi Minh where to find the best ones). *Time* magazine's "Man of the Year" twice (in 1978 and 1985), Deng was the folksy reformer and would-be democrat who in 1979 toured a Houston rodeo waving a ten-gallon hat. His economic reforms, helped along by a supportive United States, had finally opened the path to the wealth and power all of China's reformers had long sought.

Then came the massacre of young people at Tiananmen on June 4, 1989, and all the West's metaphors for China reversed yet again. But while the effect of Tiananmen on Western attitudes was profound, its effect on Deng's economic policy was minimal. No change has been deeper, or more systematically sustained, than China's reform strategy since 1978. There has not been a single lurch or tortuous passage since then that is comparable to the pre-1978 period; instead there has been a comparatively steady tendency, almost a textbook example of how to introduce a developing country into the world economy. Hu Yaobang, general secretary of the Communist Party in the 1980s, later claimed that the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee in December 1978—which marked the birth of the new policy—was a turning point in party history comparable only to the changes of 1927 and 1936.

By the beginning of 1980 a new political leadership, led by Deng Xiaoping, had established firm control over the Chinese state. Always thorough when embarking on major new programs, the Chinese leadership made the requisite revisions in basic theory and assumptions. In place of the Maoist emphasis on class struggle and the relations of production, Deng Xiaoping pushed the "theory of productive forces" and the epistemological doctrine of "seeking truth from facts." The motive force in history was not class conflict, it turned out, but an all-round development of human and material forces of production. Deng deemed science and technology to be politically neutral, thus contradicting Jiang Qing who had declared that a socialist train running late was better than a capitalist train on time. China's economists began studying Keynes and Friedman, preferring the former since he blessed a central role for the state in the economy. More subtly, the determinist "productive forces" theory nudged communist China toward learning from capitalist Japan, which had always emphasized the acquisition of advanced technologies in its march to economic prowess.

In 1981 the new premier, Zhao Ziyang, said, "We must abandon once and for all the idea of self-sufficiency . . . all ideas and actions based on keeping our door closed to the outside world and sticking to conventions are wrong." He continued, "Greater exports are the key . . . we should boldly enter the world market." Zhao cited China's vast labor pool as its key advantage in the world economy, and was not above waving the fabled potentialities of the China market in the face of Western businessmen. By that time China had joined the IMF and the World Bank, and had most-favored nation status with the European Community. The broader logic, of course, was that there was but one world—not three as Mao had said—the world of global capitalism, Acheson's world.

Slowly the staggering nature of China's "reform" became apparent. Agriculture was virtually privatized in a massive decollectivization, prices were decontrolled, the currency

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floated against the dollar, central planning moved in the direction of Keynesian macroeconomic regulation, and the massive state sector began to cut free of the government's subsidies and umbilical cord. It would take an unreconstructed determinist to have predicted, however, that the same treaty ports that fueled China's economy in the imperial era would now be touted as models to emulate. Yet in April 1981, the State Council called on everyone to "learn from Shanghai, the coastal provinces, and the advanced"—not the Shanghai that was a radical bastion in the Cultural Revolution, but the Shanghai that provides about 15 percent of China's total exports and 70 percent of its textile and light-industrial exports (bicycles, clothes, sewing machines). Soon high communist leaders were referring to "China's gold coast", while others, hardliners, drew the analogy with the old treaty ports and foreign concessions. Today China's treaty-port region is becoming another country, a rapidly growing, vast market that both fuels and benefits from the export program.

Those experts who project Chinese disintegration have no trouble locating several Chinas already: the inland provinces where the peasant majority lives, with a per capita GNP of around three hundred dollars; coastal provinces with perhaps twice as much wealth per capita; and selected enterprise zones and big cities (especially Shanghai and Canton) where huge fortunes are being made, and where average wealth is at least fifty percent higher again than in the non-urban coastal provinces.

But that is a limited perspective, for there are still other Chinas. The proximity of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia, all now making enormous investments in China, suggests that ever-increasing involvement with the several countries of "greater China" is a far more likely outcome than domestic disintegration. Counting Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and the southeast Asian Chinese diaspora (particularly active in Malaysia and Indonesia), a Chinese population of nearly fifty million beyond China's mainland borders deploys a per capita GNP averaging about fifteen thousand dollars. Here is the advance guard—or the yeast—for the ongoing transformation of the livelihoods of perhaps five hundred million Chinese in the coastal provinces. This is why Hong Kong will remain as a capitalist entrepôt, the centerpiece of an enormously productive sphere of Chinese capitalism. It will be the nodal point at which the world economy will continue to shake China.

Many China watchers seem to think that something is amiss because so much of the "exporting" from the new zones has been to China's interior. Yet this merely recapitulates within China the triangular nature of China's trade in the world economy: generally speaking, it buys from the core and sells in the periphery, and inner China is still very much peripheral in the world system. In 1985 the World Bank found that the industrial market economies took 32 percent of China's manufactured exports, the developing economies 63 percent; its imports were overwhelmingly from the former. This trend has only deepened in the last decade. Furthermore, a potentially huge domestic market gives China a great advantage over most other newly-industrializing countries, which, with low purchasing power in their home markets, run into trouble when protectionism limits their access to the American or Japanese market. The five hundred million people of the coastal zones alone represent ten times as many potential consumers as South Korea, twenty-five times as many as Taiwan.

There are, of course, many opponents of reform, now called "conservatives" in the literature. The debacle at Tiananmen in 1989 energized many aging Stalinists and Maoists, who counterattacked with the battle cry of communist orthodoxy, claiming that Tiananmen proved that the noxious, polluting influences of capitalism could not be prevented while importing Western technologies and ideas "for use." Jiang Zemin, by now Deng's designated successor, said this about Tiananmen:

> Hostile forces at home and abroad created this turmoil to overthrow the leadership of the Party, subvert the socialist system, and turn

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> China into a bourgeois republic and into an appendage of big Western capitalist powers once again. The victory and nature of this struggle represent an acute opposition between the Four Cardinal Principles and bourgeois liberalization, and it is a political struggle bearing on the life and death of our party, state, and nation. It is also a serious class struggle.

The "four upholds", as these principles were known, constituted "the foundation of the nation", according to Jiang, "whereas reform and opening to the outside world are means of strengthening the nation."

It was a restatement of the century-old *ti-yong* formula of Chinese experience and philosophy as the "base" and Western learning and technique "for use"—except that the "four principles" seemed to have been fabricated by a madman. As China deepened its export-led developmental program, bringing bankers and businessmen running from all corners of the globe, it was also to uphold "Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung thought, socialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the supremacy of Party leadership." These four principles might have been appropriate for a communist country like North Korea, which remained closed (and constantly harped on similar themes), but they merely became the butt of after-dinner jokes in 1990s China—when, that is, they were not occasions for despair. The one constant candidate for such a principled center since 1949 has been China's zealous and absolute concept of national sovereignty, about which it has been a good deal more sensitive than the Western powers who introduced the idea to China in the first place. But then, it is the only principle China now has left.

"A China That Doesn't Smell"

THE ECONOMIC imperative, together with Chinese jealousy over sovereign prerogatives, provide perhaps the best starting point for speculations about China's future. Prognostication about China is no easy task, as is demonstrated by the well nigh infinite collection of bad predictions that Americans of every political persuasion have made over the years. Whether it was the Right arguing for "unleashing" Chiang Kai-shek against the mainland when he had just contrived to lose a nation there, or the Left claiming that Mao had invented a new form of democracy, or Richard Nixon saying all things about China over the course of his long career, the record is abysmal.

Almost all thinking about China today, whether by trained expert or grazing pundit, remains colored by the events of June 1989. In a game that might be called "What's my atavism?" we have heard everything, from Henry Kissinger lamenting the 1989 events "with the pain of a spectator watching the disintegration of a family to whom one has a special attachment", to China expert W.J.F. Jenner's judgment that "the experience of medieval Europe" should be our guide to "Chinese futures."

Last year, Deng, now reconverted from the croissant-loving man in the ten-gallon hat to the "butcher of Beijing", took perhaps his last stroll through one of his "open cities", the marvelous Sino-European treaty port of Qingdao. Here is what he said then:

> The policy of taking economic construction as the key link must never be changed; the reform and open-door policy must never be altered. The party's basic line must not be shaken for 100 years. . . . We must properly draw the lesson from the former Soviet Union. . . . The Chinese Communist Party's status as the ruling party must never be challenged. China cannot adopt a multi-party system.[7]

There you have it: economic perestroika and glasnost, but political counterparts of neither. Our newest capitalist "miracle" just happens to be run by communists. Deng's persistent hypothesis has been that if China's living standards keep rising, his party can rule forever. He is probably wrong about his party, but right about the equation between prosperity and political legitimacy. Since 1978 the economy

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has grown at an average rate of 9 percent, quadrupling China's GNP. While the growth is stunning, his vision makes him no visionary; Deng is really nothing more than the Park Chung Hee of China.

This comparison is not made lightly: anyone who knows South Korea's history from 1965 to the present should know that all manner of political disorder can proceed without disrupting economic growth or dislodging the ruling groups.[8] Park declared martial law and promulgated a frankly authoritarian constitution in 1972, ran thousands of dissidents off to military boot camp, jail, or the torture chamber, bivouacked his army on the campuses—and at the same time pushed a state-dominant, radical heavy industry strategy against all the best advice of our economists. Always his theory was that economic growth would buy political legitimacy. His own security chief blew Park's brains out in 1979, his protégé Chun Doo Hwan took over the security agencies and then (probably) provoked an uprising in the southwestern city of Kwangju in May 1980 that can be compared in precise detail to what happened in June 1989 in Beijing, complete with regular military units exterminating students (the Kwangju death toll was if anything higher). Seven years later Chun was overthrown in massive street protests by students, workers, and ordinary middle class citizens. Meanwhile through the entire period, Korea's growth rates were usually the highest in the world, and Park still sits atop Korean public opinion polls as the most respected former president. Similarly, the economic transformation of Taiwan, Korea's rival in growth rates, went on under a full martial law regime, enforced from 1949 to 1987.

China is quite frankly pursuing the latest version of the developmental state theory, one our economists cannot understand but that makes complete sense to Asians as diverse as former Japanese Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke, Chiang Kai-shek, Park Chung Hee, Lee Kwan Yew, and Deng Xiaoping. *The Economist* notes that consumption patterns in China today mimic those of Taiwan around 1970. And Chinese analysts point to Harvard political scientist Samuel Huntington's theory that while political instability can be expected as per capita GNP moves from three hundred to four thousand dollars, it will end after that, and therefore so will Communist Party rule (or so it is hoped).[9]

Korea and Taiwan each had a huge state economic sector that owned the banks and most large industries, courtesy of a half-century of Japanese colonialism; the state sector produced 57 percent of Taiwan's industrial production in 1952, 40 percent in 1964, and 15 percent in 1975. Rapid growth rates in Taiwan and Korea occurred in spite of this state sector, with private firms often expanding by nearly 20 percent per year. Now in the China of the 1990s, we find a state sector that is a drag on the economy (though a huge employer of its people). This sector retards a private sector growth rate of as much as 20 percent, but is slowly giving way. By the year 2000, the state sector is expected to account for 30 percent of industrial production, and by 2010, for 18 percent or less.

The current leadership's model of preference is not Korea or Taiwan but Singapore, and indeed several newly-emerging cities (designed to absorb huge rivers of peasants leaving the villages) are laid out on the fastidious and totally managed Singapore pattern, in search of what Chairman Jiang describes as "a China that doesn't smell." When we move from the half-country of South Korea to the island of Taiwan to the city-state of Singapore, we see that China is not another "Asian tiger" but a ten thousand-pound elephant proposing to clean up its act while squatting in the middle of the world economy. It is difficult to imagine what that will ultimately mean, but perhaps our economists can explain how 1.2 billion smart people pursuing their "comparative advantage" will avoid trampling on all the rest of us. (Shades of "China shakes the world"; could Beijing's fiendish goal be to use capitalism to break capitalism?)

At any rate, this is the unarguable and inevitable direction of contemporary China. Beijing's vintage "conservative" central planner,

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Chen Yun, is about as smart as our economists: he illustrated his worldview by likening state planning to a cage and the market to a bird flying around inside it; rarely has an analogy so confirmed an utter misunderstanding of the world market's inexorable logic, which is "to batter down all Chinese Walls" (in Marx's 1848 metaphor). In this sense the Colonel Sanders dummy, standing in front of the Kentucky Fried Chicken outlet at Tiananmen Square, knows more than all the leaders who have stood atop the Gate of Heavenly Peace, scratching around for another way to wall in their people.

This ten thousand-pound Chinese elephant will not be a liberal. When television's window opened on the terrible events of Tiananmen, Western experts and pundits called the deposed premier Zhao Ziyang a "soft-liner", a "moderate", and a "liberal." This same Zhao personally sponsored the 1980s campaign for "the new authoritarianism", as did economic reformer Zhu Rongji, the leader incessantly fingered as a "moderate" successor to Deng. This campaign also explicitly took Korea and Taiwan as models, arguing that both examples showed how an echelon of technocrats under strong state guidance could transform a backward economy through financial subsidies, cheap state credits, and successive multi-year economic plans. As Zhao put it, "The major point of the theory is that the modernization of backward countries inevitably passes through a phase . . . centered on strong, authoritarian leaders who serve as the motivating force for change." Deng was typically shrewder, telling Zhao that the theory wasn't bad but the name wouldn't make for good politics.

Thus China today uses the full panoply of authoritarian measures, pioneered by Park in the early 1970s, to keep people's noses to the economic grindstone and out of politics: ubiquitous surveillance by enormous security agencies, prompt deployment of riot police, expulsions from elite universities, blacklists of forbidden books, absence of *habeus corpus*, and the torture of recalcitrant dissidents. Meanwhile under Deng's "863 Plan", put into effect in 1986, China's technocrats (who constitute around 25 percent of new Party members since 1980) figure out how to move into "high technology" industries like semiconductors, genetic engineering, and materials science.

As well as the repression, there is much else that is ugly. Recently China was judged by businessmen to be second only to Nigeria as the most corrupt major economy in the world. Informed Americans lament the millions of peasants flooding into China's cities, cluttering the train stations and sleeping on the streets (Beijing is now said to have a "floating population" of about three million). Public manners have degenerated into shoving old ladies and breaking queue lines for buses and taxis; vast clouds of black pollutants spew from overcrowded buses chugging down the streets; a spirit of pettiness and money-grubbing seems to affect everybody. The only refuge is down the back alleys, where the worst thing one might encounter is an open sewer or an old man brushing his teeth. If this is Beijing today, these are also one's indelible memories of Seoul in 1967. In brief, to figure out where China will be in the next couple of decades, one should look at where Korea and Taiwan have been since about 1970.

China and the Tigers: Who, Whom?

THESE DAYS NO country suffers the slings and arrows of human rights activists more than China, but from Beijing's point of view all the criticism is the sheerest hypocrisy. Where, after all, were those activists when Korean troops ravaged Kwangju, only to find General Chun rewarded with a quick state visit to Washington? Beijing argues that the British never allowed anything resembling democracy in their Hong Kong colony until it became apparent that it was going back to China (true), and that Taiwan only rescinded the "Period of Mobilization for the Suppression of Communist Rebellion" in 1991, four years after it ended Taiwan's martial law regime (also true). But that was then and this is now: The developmental states of East Asia have moved toward direct elections and basic political freedoms, even if their model is Japan's long-lasting

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system of single party democracy. Therefore China can look forward to a never-ending conflict between advocates of human rights and democracy, on the one hand, and economic growth on the other, as long as it fails to decompress its political system.

More significant for China's future, however, will be the strong economic undertow that Taiwan and Hong Kong will exercise on China's open cities and "golden necklace" for many years to come. China's export zones were not placed by accident: Zhuhai is opposite Macao, Shenzhen is across from Hong Kong, and Shantou and Xiamen face the Taiwan Straits. They are export entrepôts and pivots for China's involvement in the world economy: China's exports rose an astonishing 62 percent in the first quarter of 1995, with fully 40 percent of the value coming from Guangdong Province, opposite Hong Kong.

The top two foreign investors in China are Hong Kong and Taiwan, followed by the United States, with Hong Kong and Macao accounting for 63 percent of all foreign investment by the end of 1994. Will this strong counter-influence provoke China forcibly to shut down Hong Kong's politics? More likely Hong Kong's posthaste democracy will begin to colonize China's near reaches, as its economy has done. Will China continue to fire its *Dongfeng* (East Wind) medium-range missiles across the bow of General MacArthur's "unsinkable aircraft carrier" (as it did in July 1995), or will it deepen the twenty billion dollars worth of trade it now does with Taiwan, a trade heavily in China's favor? The growing exchange across the Taiwan straits is the dominant tendency, reinforced by the surprising strength of a party favoring reunification with the mainland in Taiwan's recent elections. This burgeoning exchange has already reduced Taiwan's "three no's" policy (no contact, no negotiation, no compromise) to merely the last one: no compromise. But that, admittedly, is a big "no."

Roosevelt and Churchill decided to give Taiwan back to Chiang Kai-shek at the Cairo Conference in 1943. They did so more to punish Japan than to reward China. Until recently, the nationalists did much worse than the Japanese at winning the hearts and minds of the natives. Taiwan was never more than a remote province to the last Manchu dynasty, and when Japan colonized it in 1895 there was next to no resistance. As late as 1970 a political scientist sojourning in Taiwan found nostalgia for the Japanese colonial era at every turn. But a deal is a deal, and the Cairo agreement was deeply reinforced by the decisions of two presidents, Nixon in 1972 and Carter in 1978, to trade away the independence of the island for a new relationship with China. China is completely within its international rights when it says, as it often does, that any sovereign state "is entitled to use any means it deems necessary, including military ones, to uphold its sovereignty and territorial integrity." This is a sacred principle to China, precisely because, again, it has so few principles left. Thus China clings to the formula that in the final instance it is willing to use force if the people of Taiwan declare their independence.

Deng Xiaoping's foreign policy has echoed the pragmatism of his reform program, however, just as China's foreign policy under Mao was always cautious and calculating, despite its bluster. Deng's "one China, two systems" formula is meant to imply long-term autonomy for Taiwan. He stated in 1984 that China needs peace for the next two decades to develop itself, and proceeded to slash spending for the People's Liberation Army. The share of the state budget going for defense was halved from 1977 to 1986, dropping to 9.3 percent; it rose by an average of about 12 percent annually from that point to the present, with the figures skewed by early-1990s spending increases to placate and assure the loyalty of the military, and to assuage the military's shock at the effectiveness of American weaponry in the Gulf War. Deng has moved to ensure control of the military: nineteen full generals were promoted in June 1994, and the key appointees were Deng loyalists rather than career soldiers. Much of China's recent saber-rattling over Taiwan and the Spratlys has been done by military figures hoping for more

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funds, or by civilians hoping to placate the military with tough rhetoric.

Hardliners have threatened Taiwan time and again in recent months, culminating in military exercises involving one hundred and fifty thousand infantry, air force, and naval personnel conducted just opposite the island in March 1996, and designed to intimidate voters in the presidential elections that Taiwan will hold on March 23, 1996. Hotheads in Beijing have also provoked nasty editorials in the United States by suggesting that Americans care much more for Los Angeles than they do for Taiwan, and would not dare intervene if China attacked the island. The top leaders like premier Li Peng, however, give priority to the reversion of Hong Kong in 1997 and Macao in 1999, and say that a Taiwan settlement must at minimum await those events; clearly any fighting over Taiwan in the near future would demolish the reversion of all three. Besides, China's capacity to defeat Taiwan is questionable.

Today the People's Liberation Army spends little more than South Korea and Taiwan combined on defense, and imports far less weaponry that Taiwan. Beijing's recent two billion-dollar deal to import seventy-two Russian SU-27 fighter planes, for example, does not begin to compare to Taiwan's purchase of one hundred and fifty F-16 A/Bs (a superior U.S. fighter) and many more French Mirage 2000-5Es. Indeed, Taiwan is the second largest buyer of U.S. weaponry in the world, spending 7.8 billion dollars from 1990 to 1993.[10] Beijing mostly has Soviet equipment similar to that which the United States devastated in the Gulf War, and lacks the amphibious and air cover capability to take over Taiwan.[11] Still, the question of democracy will bedevil China's growing economic relationship with Taiwan as long as it bedevils China itself. It is inconceivable that the Taiwanese majority, finally able to disabuse itself of the mainlanders who imposed their rule at the point of a gun in the late 1940s, would succumb to the straitjacket of Beijing's authoritarian politics in the 1990s. Therefore a reunification without bloodshed will only be possible when some successor to Deng begins to democratize Chinese politics.

Letting Well Enough Alone

CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER HAS argued in *Time* (July 31, 1995) that "we must contain China"—a China led by a "ruthless dictatorship" that seeks "relentlessly to expand its reach." Moreover, "containment of such a bully must begin early in its career", that is, now. Other prominent observers, like Karen Elliott House writing in the *Wall Street Journal* (July 1995), have argued that the United States and China "are on a collision course." Whereas other East Asian countries "have pursued the U.S. model of economic and political development" and value the U.S. presence in the region, House maintains that China's political economy is deeply insecure, causing it to pursue "a foreign policy that is part petulance and part paranoia."

Going directly against George Kennan's conviction concerning China's relatively modest weight in global politics, the United States fought two Asian wars with the goal of containing the Chinese revolution. Rough peasant armies, Chinese and North Korean, fought our troops to a standstill in Korea; another rough peasant army, led by the man who advised Deng Xiaoping about croissants, did even better. The two wars left about 110,000 Americans dead. Now we are advised to try once again to contain a China, this time an allegedly paranoid China armed with nuclear-tipped ICBMs that can reach the American heartland. But there is another way to think about such problems, and we have a recent example to make the point. From 1990 to 1994 the Pentagon thought seriously about fighting North Korea again, this time over its nuclear program, egged on constantly by many commentators. But instead a policy of engaging North Korea diplomatically was followed. The policy has worked successfully, against nearly all the advice of our pundits.

Some Americans cannot recognize a victory when they see one. In two decades of peace since 1975, Vietnam has made substantial progress toward becoming the country we always wanted it to be: pro-American, opening to the world market, a buyer of American

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goods. China has moved in the same direction, to an extent inconceivable in 1975, and even North Korea, that moat-builder par excellence, now wants entry to the only game in town. They all just happen to be led by men who still prefer to call themselves communists, though what meaning that term now carries is unclear. That said, it should also be underlined that not a single East Asian country pursues "the U.S. model." They all follow Japan.

Imagine what it must have been like for Chinese and Koreans to watch Japan, the country that ravaged their nations and their souls, get rich after World War II, while they fought bloody wars and suffered agrarian misery beyond American comprehension. But Kennan was right: Japan is the active factor in East Asia, still today the sole comprehensively industrialized Asian nation operating at a technologically advanced level, and thus the only real rival to the Western powers. As Chalmers Johnson has pointed out in these pages, we have been busily if surreptitiously containing Japan since 1945, and if anything our concern in this respect has deepened in the 1990s, as the Pentagon's main object of containment, the USSR, disappeared.

How—and why—should we now attempt to contain China, which wants to contain Japan? A rough balance of power now obtains in East Asia and will for many years, with Japanese economic might offset by China's military might, and with formidable conventional armies in both Koreas, Taiwan, and Vietnam also working to prevent dominance by any single power. Why not let well enough alone?

A principle reason why we find it difficult to do that is because, for us, China is still a metaphor. It is a metaphor for an enormously expensive Pentagon that has lost its bearings and that requires a formidable "renegade state" to define its mission (Islam is rather vague, and Iran lacks necessary weight). China is a metaphor for some conservatives who no longer have a Left worthy of serious attack. It is a metaphor for American idealists in search of themselves, who see it as their defining mission to bring democratic perfection to a flawed and ignorant world. And it is a metaphor for an American polity that imagines itself coterminous with mankind, and is therefore incapable of understanding true difference.[12] China has had many vices, true, but one virtuous difference through history has been its benign neglect of its neighbors. As a civilization widely perceived to have given much more than it took away—especially in contrast to Japan—China assumed that a great nation leads by example (Kennan has often said the same), that all who wish to come to the Middle Kingdom will do so, and that all the rest can stay put. This generality excludes China's subordination of Tibet since 1949, of course, but it helps to explain the long-term orientation toward the Middle Kingdom of several tributary states.

For a great scholar, C.P. Fitzgerald, the first pillar of Chinese civilization was the empire—long the fused Greece and Rome of East Asia. Settled agriculture and the "good earth" were the second pillar, placing an implicit limit on the reach of that empire. The third was Confucian orthodoxy. The peasant cultivated the soil and the scholar-official the classics, thus to satisfy the body and soul of all under heaven and maintain the moat of self-sufficiency. No emperor could have his mandate without the support of both classes. Whatever else one may say about him, Mao matched the old emperors on all fronts: He unified a China expanded to its historical full breadth with the conquest of Tibet and the intervention in Korea; he formulated and deployed a distinctively Chinese version of communist orthodoxy that was very quickly at odds with Moscow's orthodoxy; he had a policy for the peasantry that, however disastrous in economic terms, kept them on the land; above all he built the necessary moat that enabled China to remain isolated for another generation.

Thus it is not a matter of small concern that China today has neither empire nor orthodoxy, earns the contempt of the scholars, and projects for its vast peasantry a daily disappearance of both the soil and the ancient livelihood that it sustained. Orville Schell recently lamented that "there is almost nothing that is fixed or certain" in today's China; imagine how the

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Chinese must feel about that. At the end of this century the ancient pillars crumble and none but the expediency of "getting rich" remains. Still, China does have the officials, long accustomed to the delivery of goods and services whether under Confucianism or communism. The central state is now transforming itself along the lines of Japan's model; it will try to ride the capitalist tiger in the interest of a China that is both rich and powerful. Like its near neighbors, it will reach unforeseen limits placed upon it by the world economy, and will have to join rather than dominate the hierarchy of advanced industrial states. Then we will see if China has established a principle allowing it to be modern and Chinese at the same time.

China's contemporary leaders desperately want a moat, any moat, to establish distance between China and the world economy, but to have one they must have a principle of Chinese difference to enforce, and there is none at hand. Predictably, China fragments into imperialists who want to use China's military power to forge a new suzerainty, intellectuals who want their internal island of freedom, bureaucrats who harp about "bourgeois liberalism", reactionaries nostalgic for peasant China, and leaders who want to repress heterodoxy in the name of a lost orthodoxy. None of these programs can win a decisive victory; they can all cause endless trouble. But if the economy continues to grow rapidly in the context of greater China, these groups will merely be troublesome; none will shake the world. The domestic race will go to the bureaucrats and the corporate leaders, who will complete the circle of capitalism with an East Asian difference. The world will once again have shaken China.

Various "realists" deploying the "logic of power" have been quick to argue that China's growing capabilities will soon yield an assertive China intent on dominating East and Southeast Asia, or even the world; powerful China will want its place in the sun. The burden of this essay is that China is different: its history has been singular, confining its expansion to its near reaches and constraining its choice of means. When China has used force since 1949, it has done so only within its historic region, and, more often than not, judiciously and effectively. Chinese leaders may still proclaim the inherent superiority of their culture, but that heritage can teach them the ultimate weakness of a power that only expresses itself militarily. Nor can military force solve China's deepest problem, which is the continuing predominance of the West. The answer to that challenge is civilizational, not military.

China is a country whose central leaders have swayed it this way and that for two centuries in search of a principle for involvement with the modern West. Certainly no foreigner can suggest what that principle might be. For us, the route to understanding China is through self-knowledge. A wise American policy will begin with the contemplation of China's long-term humiliation at the hands of the West, and therefore with Western humility: We have shaken China enough as it is. We should do what little we can to encourage a less dominant central government, the rule of law, and basic political rights for China's citizens—but without illusions that we will make much of a difference.

The main theme in our relations with China should be to nurture a long period of economism. Do we want a China shooting missiles across Taiwan's bow, or a China that in November 1995 reduced tariffs by an average rate of 30 percent to polish its application to the World Trade Organization? This is not a hard choice, and the fact that it can be posed illustrates how far China has come in two decades. Probably it will all end with China being captured by the gravity of the world market. But it might also end with both peoples, Chinese and Americans, rediscovering the core of their own, different, civilizations. A wealthy China again capable of asserting the weight and richness of its civilization would give much to the world, and would allow both peoples to discover a new relationship. Then "China" will finally become, for Americans, not a metaphor but simply China. And then perhaps, finally, China will have shaken the world. □

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[1]Napoleon is alleged to have said that "When China wakes up, it will shake the world." Jack Belden used that title for his classic account of the Chinese revolution, but two new books on China by our best experts open with Napoleon yet again: Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn use this aphorism for their title in *China Wakes: The Struggle for the Soul of a Rising Power* (New York: Times Books, 1994); also Kenneth Lieberthal, *Governing China: From Revolution Through Reform* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995), p. xv. Harry Harding frames his useful account of Sino-American relations with cyclical metaphors in *A Fragile Relationship: The United States and China Since 1972* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1992), as does Suzanne Ogden in *China's Unresolved Issues: Politics, Development and Culture* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1995), p. 6. W.J.F. Jenner, who by his own account once sympathized with the Chinese revolution, argued that Tiananmen proved that China was still captured by its ancient, unchanging, and probably irremediable tendency toward tyranny. See Jenner's *The Tyranny of History: The Roots of China's Crisis* (New York: Penguin Books, 1994), pp. 1-11.

[2]Vaclav Smil begins his important study of China's environmental calamities this way: "For knowing China—really knowing this continent-like country of diverse environments, ancient habits, contradictory leanings, and unpredicted challenges—even a lifetime is not enough." One is tempted to say, well, a lifetime will still have to do. See Smil's *China's Environmental Crisis: An Inquiry into the Limits of National Development* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), p. vii.

[3]Nearly all the alarmist images are present in a recent book by one of Hong Kong's foremost China watchers, Willy Wo-Lap Lam, in his *China After Deng Xiaoping* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1995), pp. 383-430.

[4]Quoted in Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War, II: The Roaring of the Cataract, 1947-1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 55.

[5]Richard Madsen, *China and the American Dream: A Moral Inquiry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p. 185.

[6]Anonymous, *Looking at China With a Third Eye* (Taiyuan: Shansi People's Press, 1994). Lam, in *China After Deng Xiaoping*, calls it "the hottest book in China in 1994."

[7]Quoted in Lam, p. 386.

[8]Chinese economists who write in China's premier economic journal, *Jingji yanjiu* (Economic Studies), have been frank about their borrowings from Korea. For a recently translated sampling of their views on East Asian development in Korea, Taiwan, and elsewhere, see the special issue of *Chinese Economic Studies* (July/August 1994).

[9]For Japan the pioneering work on the developmental state was done by Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); for the same in regard to South Korea, see Jung-en Woo, *Race to the Swift* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991). For China see Chen Yizhi, "The Developmental Model for Establishing a 'Hard Government and Soft Economy'", a 1988 article cited in Ruan Ming, *Deng Xiaoping: Chronicle of an Empire* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994). Huntington's theory used different figures, see *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); Chen seems to be thinking of the income trajectory and subsequent democratic opening of Taiwan and Korea.

[10]*Time*, December 12, 1994; *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 19, 1995; *New York Times* February 7, 1996.

[11]Michael C. Gallagher, "China's Illusory Threat to the South China Sea", *International Security* (Summer 1994), pp. 169-93.

[12]See Madsen, op. cit., where these themes are explored with great sensitivity.

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Distant Compassion

CNN and Borrioboola-Gha

Clifford Orwin

AS HUMAN BEINGS have always suffered, so have they responded to the suffering of others. Compassion is as old as the human race. What is new is our window on the distress of fellow human beings no matter how remote from us. Thanks to the impact of the information revolution, there is no instance of suffering anywhere that is out of range of the camera or that, once recorded, is not instantly available for display everywhere. Often we view these reproductions "live" as the suffering actually occurs. Should we miss them the first time around, we can count on the most gripping ones being replayed again and again. Without leaving our living rooms we have the sorrows of the world at our fingertips. As the French commentator Pierre Hassner has noted, the power of televised horrors has vindicated (in a manner of speaking) Immanuel Kant's hope that a violation of right anywhere on earth would be felt everywhere on it.[1]

Naturally this development has been widely noticed. People speak of the "CNN factor." The theory is that thanks to the immediate and insistent diffusion of such images of suffering, democratic governments have come and will continue to come under pressure from their peoples to undertake humanitarian interventions. Thus may the gods of television pride themselves on furnishing their viewers with an education in humanity more universal, more vivid, more effective than any earlier one. This is a beautiful hope—but how plausible is it?

The Need for Images

IT IS A FACT that many viewers credit television with having awakened their concern for distant sufferings to which they would otherwise have remained indifferent. There is even a reason why television might seem particularly suited to such a role. Compassion depends on the imagination. Only insofar as we can imagine the sufferings that we ascribe to the other—and perhaps even only insofar as we can imagine those sufferings befalling ourselves—do these kindle our compassion for him. (It is for both these reasons that most children exhibit so little compassion.) Imagination, in turn, requires images, the more concrete the better. What will excite our sympathy for the

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[1]Hassner, "Par-delà le national et l'international: la dérision et l'espoir", *La violence et la paix: de la bombe atomique au nettoyage ethnique* (Paris: Éditions Esprit, 1995), pp. 343-4.

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people of Rwanda is not the grim tally of the dead or displaced, however horrific that may be. As the French sociologist Luc Boltanski has noted in his valuable study, *La Souffrance à distance* (*Suffering at a Distance*), a table of statistics on poverty, however grim, does not evoke compassion with the plight of the poor.[2] What is needed are images of particular victims, pegs on which to hang our imagination. As Kant once remarked, "a suffering child fills our heart with sadness, while we learn with indifference the news of a terrible battle."[3]

Of course, as we may as well admit at the outset, televised images of suffering trade at a substantial discount. The first point about such images on which to insist is also the most obvious. As with everything televised, we can always turn them off or tune them out, i.e., watch without seeing and listen without hearing. In the many households in which television serves as a permanent background din, the horrors that it displays remain in the background also. As for those viewers who do pay attention, they are always free to change the channel. The five hundred-channel universe will offer plenty of alternative fare. Recently, advertising campaigns for foster parent programs have begun to challenge the viewer directly either to respond to the suffering displayed before him or just to switch channels as he has done so often in the past. I would be curious to know the success of such campaigns.

Let's assume, however, that as good citizens we do watch the news each night. We then experience the rhythm of the typical newscast, which follows grave matters with trivial ones (e.g., weather, sports, "lifestyles", and entertainment news). Whatever sufferings may have assailed us at the top of the hour, our minds are eased back into the usual preoccupations of everyday life in a consumer society. Television producers tend to remember—they have confessed it to me—that their audience wishes to be entertained. And the right amount of suffering is entertaining—but only the right amount. Even within the realm of televised pathos, the actual misfortunes of distant peoples must vie with talk shows, soap operas, and prime time dramas, all striving to be more maudlin than the competition. So while television doubtless renders distant sufferings more vivid, it does not thereby necessarily render them more real.

The danger of blurring the line between real and fictive suffering is all the greater in the case of foreign affairs, our sense of the reality of which is none too solid to begin with. So remote are these affairs from our ordinary concerns as citizens of modern democracy, and so tenuous their relevance to these concerns, that, as Joseph Schumpeter long ago observed, "one feels oneself to be moving in a fictitious world."

> What strikes me most of all and seems to me to be the core of the trouble is the fact that the sense of reality is so completely lost. Normally, the great political questions take their place in the psychic economy of the typical citizen with those leisure-hour interests that have not attained the rank of hobbies. . . . This reduced sense of reality accounts not only for a reduced sense of responsibility but also for the absence of effective volition. One has one's phrases, of course, and one's . . . likes and dislikes. But ordinarily they do not amount to what we call a will—the psychic counterpart of purposeful responsible action.[4]

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[2]Boltanski, *La Souffrance à distance: morale humanitaire, médias, et politique* (Paris: Métailié, 1993), p. 27.

[3]Immanuel Kant, *[Remarks to the] Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime (Bemerkungen zu den Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen)* [1764-65], trans. J.T. Goldthwait (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), pp. 57-62.

[4]Schumpeter, "The Classical Doctrine of Democracy", in *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 261.

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Can television, itself a "leisure-hour interest that [has] attained the rank of [a hobby]", bring home to us the reality of such faraway happenings? Yes and no. Recent writers have underscored the paradox that television at the same time brings distant matters closer to us and serves to distance us from these very matters. The televiewer is not as such a teledoer (or even a doer of things close to home). As Curtis Gans puts it, "People say that television brings the international community into your living room, but what it really does is bring *you* into your living room" (and, he might have added, keep you there). Harvard political scientist Robert D. Putnam has suggested a negative correlation between television watching and participation in community activities of whatever sort (and, more interestingly, a positive correlation between newspaper reading and such participation).[5]

I will not dwell on the vanity of looking to television to effect universal moral regeneration. The noteworthy fact is rather that, despite the ease of evasion, the CNN factor is real. Consider the terrible spectacles of starvation in Somalia, tribal slaughter in Rwanda, and ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia. In the past, the first two of these would hardly have come to the attention of publics in the Western democracies, let alone have captured their imagination. Nor would Bosnia have assumed the role of the central foreign policy issue confronting those democracies. None of these cases is perceived by the relevant publics as crucial to their respective national interests. The widespread response to them has therefore indeed been "humanitarian", and has been stimulated largely by televised images.

In assessing the promise of this response, we should note at the outset Boltanski's distinction between "humanitarian" and "communal" (*communautaire*) frameworks of response to suffering.[6] The former obtains where there is no commitment or partiality (or for that matter antipathy) prior to the perception of suffering. This perception forges the bond, which expresses itself in the spectator's efforts to relieve the suffering. Here the reaction is that of a human being to the distress of a fellow human being, not that of an American to the distress of a fellow American, or of a Presbyterian to that of a fellow Presbyterian, or of a communist to that of a fellow communist. Responses of this last sort, reflecting a prior commitment founded on a shared particular identity, are what Boltanski calls "communal."

In terms of this schema, then, a Hutu's attachment to other Hutus is communal: it precedes and shapes his response to their misfortune. Similarly, his hatred of Tutsis conditions his reaction to whatever suffering might befall them: he welcomes it, and may seek to aggravate it. He will surely not wish to relieve it. If he does, he rises above his tribal identity to respond to the sufferings of a fellow human being; in that case his response is a humanitarian one. The typical onlooker from afar is partial to neither tribe and interests himself in the fate of its members only as victims of suffering; his response is "humanitarian."

Rousseau and Mrs. Jellyby

BOLTANSKI'S distinction between humanitarian and communal responses to suffering recalls the reflections of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the first great modern proponent of a politics founded on compassion. While modern thought had been philanthropic or "humanitarian" from the outset, Rousseau was the first to seek to ground this concern in a direct emotional response to the sufferings of others. He was the first to interpret moral education as largely an education in compassion, relying precisely on exposure to images of the sort that we are discussing.

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[5]Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital", *Journal of Democracy* (January 1995), p. 75.

[6]Boltanski, pp. 24-9.

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In his work *Émile or On Education* Rousseau depicts the education of an imaginary pupil whose tutor (Rousseau's alter ego) sets out to instill in him the virtue of humanity. This requires exposure to the whole range of human suffering, moral as well as physical, in every station of life and in every class of society. The poor, the sick, the crippled, the unfortunate and the dispossessed, those ravaged by vanity—all have their day in the sun of Émile's compassion. Many an expedition must be undertaken, and many a *mise en scène* contrived to assure Émile an ample and balanced diet of vicarious suffering. As the obtrusive barriers to mutual sympathy in the society of the ancien régime were those of class, it is these above all which Émile must learn to transcend. He must undertake a new kind of Grand Tour (carefully chaperoned as was the usual sort), not of the other countries of Europe but of the different milieux of misery within his own. Émile is to learn that contrary to what the rich man likes to think, the poor are as sensitive to suffering as he is—and he is as vulnerable to it as they are.

Yet if breadth of sensitivity to human misery is the goal, why not a Grand Tour of the usual sort? Since Rousseau likens the youthful Émile to a knight-errant, relieving suffering wherever he finds it, why not make of him a *compatissant sans frontières*?

As a matter of fact, Émile is to be led to conclude from his exposure to suffering that it is the lot not just of Frenchmen but of mankind as such. Practically speaking, however, Rousseau placed no faith in a global or cosmopolitan benevolence. He viewed this last as a pose of the intellectuals of his day, the so-called *philosophes*.

> Distrust those cosmopolitans who go to great length in their books to discover duties they do not deign to fulfill around them. A philosopher loves the Tartars so as to be spared having to love his neighbor.[7]

Rousseau's critique of what we would call "humanitarianism" follows from his analysis of the psychological basis of compassion. According to him the force of our commiseration varies with our capacity to relate to the specific sufferings and sufferer. Compassion tends to be most effective where spectator and victim have the most in common.

> It seems that the sentiment of humanity evaporates and weakens as it is extended over the whole world, and that we can't be moved by calamities in Tartary or Japan as we are by those of a European people. Interest and commiseration must in some way be compressed to be activated. Now since this inclination in us can only be useful to those with whom we have to live, it is good that the feeling of humanity, concentrated among fellow citizens, gains fresh force through the habit of seeing one another and the common interest that unites them.[8]

Nearby sufferings foster compassion in those educated to respond to them; far-off ones provide the insensitive with an alibi for failing to act to relieve those nearby. Rousseau's critique of compassion at a distance anticipates Dickens's presentation of

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[7]Rousseau, *Émile or On Education*, translated with an interpretive essay by Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), p. 39. For the original French see Rousseau, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. B. Gagnebin and M. Raymond, 5 vols. (hereafter *O.C.*), (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1959-95), vol. 4, p. 249. Cf. Rousseau's remark in the *Geneva Manuscript*: "It is apparent from this what should be thought of those supposed cosmopolitans who, justifying their love of the homeland by means of their love of the human race, boast of loving everyone in order to have the right to love no one." Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, with *Geneva Manuscript and Political Economy*, ed. Roger D. Masters and trans. Judith R. Masters (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), p. 162 (*O.C.*, vol. 3, p. 287).

[8]Rousseau, *Discourse on Political Economy*, in Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, p. 219 (*O.C.*, vol. 3, p. 254).

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Mrs. Jellyby, so mindful of the plight of the natives of Borrioboola-Gha and so blind to the needs of her own children and the sufferings of the London poor.[9]

To which we must add, of course, that even if the men of Rousseau's day had possessed the will to global beneficence, they would have lacked the means. Not even the French king, the most powerful monarch in Europe, could have provided "humanitarian aid" to the victims of a disaster in Tartary. Hence Rousseau's remark that one's commiseration could only be useful to those with whom one lived. Obviously this is no longer the case. On the other hand, even were interventions on the other side of the globe to become possible, Rousseau would not have expected human beings to undertake them with the constancy that their fellow citizens might expect from them.

Returning then to Boltanski's distinction between humanitarian and communal frameworks of response to suffering, we can see that Rousseau's thought issues for all practical purposes in an endorsement of the communal one. The more we share with the sufferer above and beyond our common humanity, the keener our sense of the latter. A tight political community (Rousseau's models were ancient Sparta and Rome) fosters this sense of humanity (if only toward other insiders). The absence of such communities (as in the Europe of large monarchies of Rousseau's day) tends to diffuse it. The choice is between an intense but constrained humanity and a universal but shallow one. Those who speak of the "global village" of television watchers must consider whether this expression is not misleading. While the relations of traditional villagers were permanent, deep, and insular, those of their global equivalents are fleeting, casual, even illusory. The power of television notwithstanding, what we feel for a distant stranger is unlikely to approach our solicitude for one of our own. Unless we're a Mrs. Jellyby.

Yet another obstacle, then, to a sustained commitment to any humanitarian intervention in the Third World is the "otherness" of those who need our assistance there. By this Boltanski intends more than the foreignness of these peoples in the usual sense. He means to convey as well the vast chasm separating our way of life from those of the sufferers to whom we are called upon to rally. There is nothing to mediate between the two ways of life; while appealing to our common humanity, these ragged, tribal, often unpeaceable peoples are alien to us in every other respect.

Indeed, this gulf is perhaps wider than it ever has been, not only in material terms but even in spiritual ones. In the 1920s, survey research disclosed that the people whom Americans most disliked were the Turks. Americans then were still deeply Christian—as were the victims of the Turks. So too Americans of the 1950s accepted a special humanitarian obligation to the South Koreans, destituted by the struggle against communism. In Boltanski's terms, a "communal" element supported the humanitarian one, and focused and invigorated the latter just as Rousseau would have predicted.

The Cold War is over and Christianity has declined in the West for several generations now. We are thus left with two fewer grounds of identification with any particular group of sufferers in the Third World. There remains, of course, a variety of "communal" attachments: that of Jews to Israel, for example, and more recently, that of African Americans to Haiti. Turkish Americans will side with Turkey, and Greek Americans with Greece. One can't hold a discussion of the former Yugoslavia without attracting indignant partisans. But most of us will lack such attachments in most of the cases that confront us as viewers. The media choose their featured victims from the larger slate available to them, and from these the viewer chooses his. Given the interchangeableness of the sufferers, however—all are grievously afflicted, all are worthy of our compassion, all are people with whom we

[9]Charles Dickens, *Bleak House*, chapters 4, 5, 8.

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have little in common beyond this—it is not surprising that television can rarely generate permanent constituencies for them. One such case in which it has played some role is the partiality of certain Western intellectuals for Sarajevo, on the (dubious) premise that its citizens are modern secularists, victims of a sectarianism in which they take no part.

Increasingly, then, humanitarianism in Boltanski's sense, and it alone, will define the relationship of most of us with the majority of distant sufferers. Humanitarianism as so conceived may link human beings however dissimilar, but such links are liable to be fickle and highly unstable. To find, as the Good Samaritan did, a single victim by the roadside is one thing. To confront a succession of them on television, widely scattered around the globe, is something else entirely. Our humanitarian impulses may fire, but they will also tend to sputter. On the one hand, we wish that we could help; on the other, we are only too likely to feel ourselves absolved by the fact of this very wish.

To Intervene Ineffectually

BUT IF WE ourselves are slow to act, we will still welcome such action on the part of others. Whatever the limitations of a televised perspective on distant sufferings, it is likely to foster in citizens a predisposition toward humanitarian intervention by governments. Here, however, we must pay attention to the adjective as well as the noun: "humanitarian" qualifies "intervention."

The instances of Somalia, Rwanda, and Bosnia, to name three of the most recent, disclose not only the possibilities but the limits of humanitarian action. Indeed, for millions of North Americans (I discuss only the continent that I know best) "humanitarian" implies the limits of the desirable commitment to a given situation in which their nation has no interests of a more pressing sort. As that which is noble precisely because it is not (from the point of view of the donor's interests) urgent, humanitarianism has at the same time the highest and the lowest claim to the attention of the donor country.

As a principle of foreign policy, then, "humanitarianism" proves a curious blend of interventionism and isolationism. (This is as true of Canadians as of Americans, for while Canadians have been as willing to contribute their young men as peacekeepers as Americans have been generally averse to it, what they mean by peacekeeping is an activity involving little danger.) Hence the penchant for multilateralism in operations of this kind. This last is taken not only to vouch for the humanitarianism of an intervention—multilateralism abroad being analogous to nonpartisanship at home—but also to limit both its costs and risks.[10]

From this it follows that the viability of humanitarian intervention abroad depends very much on the perception of it at home. Here too the role of television is both crucial and ambiguous. As no other medium is as successful in evoking sentiment in favor of intervention in the first place, so none should have proved as effective at sustaining it. A long train of images of suffering, as a daily feature in months of newscasts, provides an ongoing reminder of the humanitarian basis of the intervention. But it also fuels doubt as to whether the intervention is succeeding. And while underscoring the ruthlessness of an oppressor may deepen indignation toward him as well as compassion for his victim, it also highlights the risks inherent in continued intervention.

Both of these effects are on display in the response of the American public to the situation in Bosnia. An article in the *New York Times* this past summer surveyed the views of the inhabitants of Merrillville, Indiana:

[10]On the limits of humanitarianism in foreign policy as viewed from a European perspective, see the excellent discussion by Hassner, pp. 350-1.

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> Donna Stath was embarrassed. 'I try to follow the war in Bosnia, but it's so confusing. . . . It's been going on for three hundred or four hundred years. I know there are atrocities going on. . . . I think it's sad . . . I think, Golly, is this a similar situation to Nazi Germany? And everyone ignored that for how many years?' But when it comes to the question of American involvement in Bosnia, Mrs. Stath . . . feels deeply reluctant. 'I think it would be another Vietnam', she said. 'I don't think our sons and fathers should be losing their lives over it. I think we should continue the dialogue.'[11]

Mrs. Stath is torn between two precedents for viewing the conflict: that of Nazi Germany, which implies that a more vigorous American intervention is imperative, and that of Vietnam, which she takes to imply the opposite. Not surprisingly it is the more recent of the two that prevails. The interviewer presents Mrs. Stath's response as typical; it is certainly the case that it reflects the ambivalence (and even the vocabulary) of television coverage. Others interviewed in Merrillville explicitly presented televised images of suffering as their only source of information about the conflict. While they were shaken, these images had left them as uneasy as Mrs. Stath over the prospect of direct intervention.

It is hardly surprising that the responses of Western governments to the Balkan war have deferred to this ambivalence. These governments have wanted to do something, and they have wanted to appear to do something, but they have not wanted to appear to do too much. They have wished their interventions to be [tele]visible, while avoiding [tele]visible losses. "We knew from the beginning of the war what can no longer be concealed", the German essayist Peter Schneider has written, "[that] Western threats and initiatives were meant primarily to ease the suffering of the European onlookers rather than that of the victims themselves."[12] Not long ago a high official of a European foreign ministry was asked—off the record—why his country's policy was neither to intervene in force in Bosnia nor to refrain from intervening, but rather to intervene ineffectually. He replied that such was the policy dictated by the CNN factor. From such revelations a skeptic might conclude that as it is on television that the evil comes to light, so that is where it must be combatted: images of actual suffering are neutralized by ones of symbolic concern.

With a flawed peace agreement now in place and a U.S.-led intercession underway to enforce it, the situation has changed dramatically. The Clinton administration has deferred to the frailty of compassion as a *casus belli* with a self-defeating promise to withdraw American forces in one year's time. In the meantime, images of refugees and sniping have given way to perhaps even more affecting ones of empty snowswept fields beneath which thousands of corpses lie buried. The question remains whether an intervention whose public support has been generated by humanitarianism at a distance will continue to be sustained by it. For now this question is unanswerable, yet it may soon become moot. With the engagement of American forces a new "communal" interest is likely to override the "humanitarian" one, with consequences impossible to predict. Will the public cut and run if and when serious American casualties occur? Or will indignation at those who have inflicted them fire a new determination to punish malefactors no longer perceived as merely the savage enemies of others?

Those who, like myself, have favored intervention in the Balkans are obliged to consider what policy will best serve relative

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[11] Sara Rimer, "Bosnian War Bewilders a Midwestern Town: Merrillville, Indiana, Feels Sympathy for Victims but Fears a Morass", *New York Times*, July 24, 1995, pp. A1, A7.

[12] "False Tears Over Bosnia", *New York Times*, July 30, 1995, p. D15.

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peace and stability there. It will not be one of continued reliance on the humanitarian concern of the West. When this past summer the Croats joined the Muslims in submitting to the risks (and inflicting the hardships) required to revamp the map of the region, thus paving the way for the Dayton agreement and succeeding where UN peacekeeping had failed, it was evidently not compassion that drove them. As no stability can be expected in the region that is not supported by a balance of forces, the logic of compassion dictates so rearming and retraining the Muslims as to free them from dependence on our compassion. Yet this is just the sort of activity at which the sentiment of compassion balks—in this case seconding timidity.

The Desensitizing Effect

TO MY MIND the evidence supports Rousseau's account of the limits of political compassion. To us his critique of cosmopolitanism seems harsh, even cramped. We are familiar with a form of hypocrisy opposite to that which he denounced: the invocation of the priority of local concerns to excuse inaction on global ones. Jean-Marie Le Pen has remarked that he will consider it appropriate to concern himself with rapes in Bosnia only when there are no longer any rapes in the region of Paris. This recalls the rationalizations of earlier French politicians (leftist as well as rightist) for turning a blind eye to German persecution of the Jews.[13] If humanitarian action abroad has to await the cessation of all problems at home, then none will ever be undertaken.

Yet there is this much truth in Le Pen's odious position: that the government of France does bear primary responsibility for the safety of the women of Paris and that its duty to protect them no matter what the cost is clearer than its duty to the women of Bosnia. However general the obligation to affirm universal human rights, a government's duty to risk the lives of its citizens to secure those rights for strangers—in effect the duty to police the world—will always remain debatable. And we may rightly deride the government that undertakes an intervention abroad to distract attention from nagging problems at home. Today any such intervention is likely to be a humanitarian one, and if indeed its motive is diversionary, then Rousseau's critique of "loving the Tartars" is fully applicable to it.

The CNN factor is real, but it remains to be seen whether its effectiveness will stand the test of time. The final pitfall of the new abundance of televised suffering is also the most ironic. It is the danger that constant exposure to such suffering will not sensitize but inure us to it. It has long been observed that those whose daily fare is the suffering of others tend toward indifference to it—"it is", as Rousseau remarks, "by dint of seeing death and suffering that priests and doctors become pitiless."[14] Such is now our situation as spectators. As one victim recedes from view another always appears to replace it. Televised misery resembles the hydra: It persists (if sometimes with a new head) no matter how hard we attack it.

The globalization of the spectacle of suffering may broaden the horizons of our compassion, but will it do so without diluting its force? Will world reserves of beneficence expand to meet increased demand, or will there be an ever thinner spreading of the same naturally limited supply? The international flow of humanitarian concern may come to resemble that of capital. Both will migrate freely, and their allegiances will prove almost equally fickle. Last year the Tutsis attracted attention, six months ago the Chechens, today the Bosnian Muslims. Newer, fresher causes will siphon air time and humanitarian sentiment from older, tedious, and intractable ones. Like those residents of great cities who become hardened to the misery that lies always near to hand, we voyeurs of the global village will turn away from the distant sufferings that come daily within our purview. □

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[13]Boltanski, *La Souffrance à distance*, p. 279, note 98.
[14]*Émile*, p. 231 (*O.C.*, vol. 4, p. 517).

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Making Sense of Japan

A Reassessment of Revisionism

R. Taggart Murphy

IN HIS BOOK *Dead Right*, David Frum tells a story about two Viennese Jews reading newspapers in a coffee shop at the end of the nineteenth century. When the man with the respectable daily sees the other holding a scurrilous anti-semitic rag, he asks in astonishment: "What's come over you?" The other responds, "I'll tell you...In your paper, I read about old Jewish men murdered in Romania, about Jewish women raped by Cossacks in Russia, about Captain Dreyfuss unjustly accused in France. In this one, I read that Jews control the banks and stock exchanges, that we hoard sacks of gold in our cellars, that every government on earth trembles at our orders. I prefer good news." While Frum had a different purpose in mind, the joke would undoubtedly seem wonderfully apt to officials of Japan's Ministry of Finance (MOF) in light of the awe with which they have often been viewed in Washington.

The MOF presides today over an economy in its fourth straight year of next-to-no growth. Unemployment is at a post-1950s high. The stock market has teetered since 1991 on the edge of an abyss that could wipe out the reported capital of most Japanese banks. These banks have piled up more bad debts than the existing financial assets of any of a half-dozen developed countries; no one believes the semi-official estimates of *only* fifty trillion yen (five hundred billion dollars). Japan's real estate market, accounting at current prices for at least one half the real estate value of the entire planet, is, like its stock market, a fathomless black hole where "price" and "value" are meaningless chimera. Japan runs the largest current account surpluses of any country in history but cannot re-start the engines of growth. It is unable to finance the deficits of its trading partners without chronic losses on the securities—mostly denominated in dollars—it buys to finance those deficits. As a result, its currency soars to levels that make it impossible for many of its exporters to earn enough on each exported item to cover the labor and supplies necessary to make it (variable costs), not to mention the item's pro-rata share of overhead (i.e., fixed costs).

Nor do the seemingly endless economic crises tell the whole story. The MOF finds itself for the first time the subject of extensive scrutiny in the Japanese press. Mainstream publications complain about the proliferation of retired MOF bureaucrats in Japan's ostensibly "private sector" financial institutions. Articles on cozy links between MOF officials and two failing credit unions with gangster connections complicate efforts to rescue these unions. In December, Shinozawa Kyosuke, the MOF's administrative vice minister vacated his seat at the pinnacle of the bureaucratic hierarchy a mere

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eight months into his term, attempting without much success to explain his resignation as a gesture aimed at ending controversy over the Ministry's handling of seven bankrupt housing-loan companies (*jusen*), whose problems stand at the center of the country's financial mess. The settlement itself has been widely seen as a humiliating defeat for the MOF. While the MOF dips into public funds to bail out the *jusen*, the agricultural cooperatives who were their principal lenders get off nearly scot-free, thanks to formidable backing from the Agriculture Ministry—one of MOF's long-standing *bêtes noires*—and the Liberal Democratic Party.

But like the Viennese Jew in Frum's joke, the harried MOF official can take comfort in the mixture of envy, resentment, and admiration he still provokes in Washington. A series of books and articles with great influence there place the MOF on the verge of a triumph more complete and more glorious than that accorded any group of bureaucratic officials ever. These writings depict the MOF as the central directing organ of the most productive and advanced economy in history, one that has already overtaken the United States in most significant respects and will surpass it in all remaining ones—including sheer absolute economic size—by the end of the century. Thus Eamonn Fingleton salutes MOF officials as the creators of an economic system far more advanced than capitalism, a system that represents "as sharp and portentous a break from capitalism as capitalism was from feudalism."[1] Japan's "ascendancy" over the global economy, to quote Chalmers Johnson and E.B. Keehn, is already established and awaits only the proper timing to be revealed to East Asia and the world.[2]

The most widely used term for this school of writing is "revisionism." The label was originally applied by *Business Week*'s former Tokyo bureau chief, Robert Neff, to a series of books and articles that emerged in 1988-9, a time when it was obvious to all but the willfully blind that the explosive phenomenon of Japan required revised thinking. That was a moment in history when hegemony over the world's economy seemed indeed to have passed to Japan. Tokyo's stock exchange had outstripped New York's to become the world's largest, while even Osaka had bumped London to fourth place. The market appetites of Japanese investors virtually determined the price of U.S. Treasury bonds. Japanese companies, secure in their dominance of most of the world's important manufacturing industries, had gone on a global buying spree, snapping up prize U.S. assets from MCA to Rockefeller Center to Firestone, while their banking counterparts bought four of California's top eight banks and controlled one quarter of all credit extended in that state. Meanwhile, like a great conductor leading an orchestra with the subtlest of cues, the MOF had skillfully played the U.S. bond market to suppress dollar interest rates in the fall of 1988, thereby helping to avert a potentially serious obstacle to Japan's glide to global pre-eminence—a White House in the hands of Democrats with economic nationalist leanings.

The old, received wisdom on Japan was almost useless in helping policymakers grapple with this phenomenon. Such wisdom derived largely from the tenets of so-called modernization theory that itself grew out of the ideological battles of the early Cold War. Modernization theory was an ideological construct intended to counteract the grip of Marxism on developing country elites—like Marxism, it incorporated the logic of development; but unlike Marxism, it postulated American-style capitalism as the norm to which development necessarily aspires. Japan became the paradigmatic example of a successful modernizing society, moving inexorably toward an economic and political system indistinguishable in essence from

[1]Eamonn Fingleton, *Blindside* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995), p. 4.

[2]Chalmers Johnson and E.B. Keehn, "The Pentagon's Ossified Strategy", *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 1995), p. 104.

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that of the United States. All residual differences—the large business alliances known as *keiretsu* that dominate the Japanese economy, single-enterprise unions, "lifetime" employment, a low propensity to import, and the near total discretion of the bureaucracy in executing policy free of legislative or judicial oversight—were explained away as innocuous cultural phenomena on a par with Kabuki theater, flower arrangement, and the tea ceremony.

Modernization theory never enjoyed unquestioned acceptance in American academic circles, particularly after the Vietnam War opened up a generational rift between its older intellectual champions such as Walt Rostow and Edwin Reischauer and younger challengers grouped together at the leftist Committee of Concerned Asia scholars. But, at least with respect to Japan, it fit the needs of Washington's defense and foreign policy establishments like fine tailoring from Saville Row. Japan's military importance was obvious: it lay astride the Soviet Pacific Fleet's warm-water access to the open ocean, and a vast network of bases and installations from Okinawa to the northern tip of Hokkaido formed the linchpin of the American military presence in East Asia. Japan's political importance was equally great. It served as an icon of the prosperity awaiting countries that followed the capitalist path under American tutelage, instead of the poverty and backwardness of the Indias and Tanzanias seduced by the siren songs emanating from Moscow and Beijing. With the single-mindedness of white blood cells smothering invading bacteria, Washington's elites had for decades viscerally defended America's Japan policy from any challenge by those fretting over growing trade deficits and the steady loss of industry after industry to Japanese competition. Modernization theory proved an exceptionally useful tool to drain such challenges of their power to inspire fear. After all, if Japan was converging with the United States, why worry about trade imbalances that were bound to disappear with such convergence?

But the fall of the Berlin Wall and Japan's emergence in the late 1980s as an economic superpower undermined the rationale for this ideological construct, while destroying its pretensions. At a time when the United States was adding some one trillion dollars per presidential term to its national debt, watching its lower-middle class sink into poverty, and turning over its city streets every evening to gangs of fatherless youths with guns, it was getting harder to argue with a straight face that the world's leading creditor nation—a place of clean, crime-free urban centers, polite, literate, well-dressed children, and state-of-the-art factories—was somehow "converging" with the United States.

The End of Consensus

WHEN AMERICAN policymakers in the late 1980s began groping for a new conceptual framework for Japan policy, they found much of the groundwork already laid in the form of a 1982 book by the then-Berkeley professor, Chalmers Johnson, entitled *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925-1975*. The book contained a history of one of Japan's key bureaucracies—the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI)—a bureaucracy that particularly in the 1950s and 1960s had been second only to the MOF in the power it enjoyed over economic decision-making in Japan. Implicit in the breathtaking mass of historical detail Johnson had assembled lay two intellectual time-bombs that ultimately blew up the American postwar consensus on Japan.

The first bomb was the irrefutable demonstration that MITI's tactics and what Johnson labeled the "institutions of high-speed growth"—industrial targeting, preferential access to credit by targeted industries, "overloan" (the practice by large Japanese banks of lending far in excess of their deposit bases, with the gap made up by the Bank of Japan), the *keiretsu*—were the product not of

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American guidance but rather of three decades of experimentation, beginning with Japan's 1927 banking crisis and running through the depression, the war, the occupation, and on into the 1950s. The United States had indeed played a critical role in fostering this experimentation, but not as a teacher. Rather, operating under the assumption that Japan's bureaucrats simply executed policies determined elsewhere, American occupation officials unwittingly concentrated power in the hands of the economic bureaucracies. They had created a power vacuum by breaking up the other prewar power centers—the military, the social-control bureaucracies, the giant trusts known as *zaibatsu*—and replacing them with the largely empty formal trappings of democratic government.

It was this vacuum that gave economic bureaucrats in the MOF, MITI, and such extra-government bureaucracies as the Keidanren (the National Federation of Economic Organizations, often misleadingly described as a "big business lobby") and the Keizai Doyukai (the Committee for Economic Development, a brain trust of bureaucrats and industrialists), the room to apply on a nation-wide scale economic methods that had first been tested in narrow sectors of the war economy. The roots of Japan's unique system of industrial financing lie, for example, in measures adopted in 1942 to ensure the munitions industry had priority access to funds, while the clusters of linked banks, large end-product manufacturers, and suppliers that dominate such Japanese economic beachheads as Malaysia, northern Wales, and southern California are following a pattern first visible in the colonial Manchuria of the 1930s.

Johnson's second intellectual time-bomb—one even more destructive of American illusions—lay in his elucidation of the assumptions informing the purposes and nature of economic activity implicit in this experimentation. These assumptions were at such variance with those that underlie conventional American understanding that they seemed outlandish when Johnson drew attention to them. Most Americans believe, for example, that markets are immutable facts of the human condition: witness the ubiquitous use of such terms as "the market" and "market forces" that only incidentally describe concrete markets existing in time and place, and that are examples of ideological rather than descriptive language. The notion that markets are indispensable preconditions to economic life sustains the popular presumption that while governments in Pyongyang, Havana, or wherever may succeed in suppressing "the market" temporarily, such efforts are as self-evidently doomed as, say, attempts by religious sects to suppress the sex drive.

Japan's powerholders, however, have viewed markets as tools, useful in some contexts but to be avoided in others. Markets were handy in purging less efficient companies from given industries, but they were rarely used to allocate scarce credit among industrial sectors, and they were certainly not allowed to determine which products Japanese companies would supply to Japanese consumers and which products these consumers would import. American commentators ignorant of history and geography—and thus unaware that societies in which markets form the overarching principles of social organization are limited to a small handful of modern countries—are now well into their fourth decade of waiting for supposedly "pent-up" consumer demand in Japan to burst the fetters of Tokyo's restrictive trade practices.

Beyond the nature of markets lay the whole purpose of economic life. Questioning this seemed like questioning the purpose of lungs. For Americans, economic activity self-evidently existed to provide a better material life for people. But for Japan, economic activity is an instrument—*the* instrument in the postwar period—of national power. Improving livelihoods is incidental. As Johnson wrote, "Observers coming from market-rational systems (i.e., those like the

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American) often misunderstand the plan-rational system (i.e., the Japanese) because they fail to appreciate that it has a political and not an economic basis."[3]

Finally, Johnson contrasted the stance of governments such as the United States, on the one hand, and those such as Japan, on the other toward economic outcomes. The former, "capitalist regulatory states" in Johnson's terminology, sought to set the rules of economic activity and might intervene to ameliorate its results, but they did not fundamentally attempt to determine those results. The latter governments, "capitalist developmental states", directed economic activities in order to achieve predetermined outcomes. (Leninist states formed a third category—planned economies that for purely ideological reasons eschewed market mechanisms).

To Americans, this all sounded at the same time reprehensible and vaguely familiar: reprehensible because so undemocratic—the concentration of bureaucratic power necessary to achieve predetermined outcomes could not easily be squared with democracy—and thus theoretically not possible in a country that had been supposedly re-made by a benevolent occupation into a kind of junior United States; vaguely familiar because it resembled the way Marxists talked. Americans knew that Soviet leaders used economic activity as an instrument of national power instead of a means of improving livelihoods. But to be told that America's foremost Asian ally engaged in state-directed economic planning, with bureaucrats steering credit toward heavy industry, was most disconcerting. In fact, as Johnson demonstrated, Japan's economic bureaucrats were intellectual cousins of the Marxists, drawing on the same Hegelian heritage that gave rise to the Gosplan. American social scientists have forgotten, if they ever knew, that the premises underlying democratic capitalism and liberal democracy are neither inevitable nor universal but reflect the conclusions of one Anglo-French philosophical tradition. This is a powerful tradition, but there are others. In one of the most celebrated passages in his book, Johnson wrote: "Japan's political economy can be located precisely in the line of descent from the German Historical School—sometimes labeled 'economic nationalism', Handelspolitik, or neomercantilism."[4]

Despite its formidable scholarship, Johnson's book rested uneasily inside the universities. The carving-up of the academic landscape into mutually wary and heavily demarcated territories has been particularly destructive of area studies—including, conspicuously, Japan studies. One of modernization theory's most pernicious legacies is the notion that all places and all peoples are essentially alike—a notion that is fundamental to rational choice theory and neo-classical economics.[5] Thus it was hardly surprising that American academics reacted to Johnson's book largely in terms of an opportunity to build reputations and careers by attacking it.[6]

Most of these attacks, however, suffered from the fact that they appeared in books written to secure tenure for their authors.

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[3]Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy 1925-1975* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982), p. 24.

[4]*Ibid.*, p. 16.

[5]See Chalmers Johnson and Barry Keehn, "Rational Choice and Asian Studies", *The National Interest* (Summer 1994), for more on the subject.

[6]Among these would be *Strategic Capitalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993) by Princeton's Kent Calder and *Japan's Political Marketplace* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993) by Yale's Frances Rosenbluth and the University of Chicago's Mark Ramseyer. The former book is discussed in Karel van Wolferen's "Wrong on Japan", *The National Interest* (Fall 1993); the latter in Johnson and Keehn, *The National Interest* (Summer 1994).

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This meant that they were written in dense, jargon-laden, footnote-studded prose that virtually guaranteed they would go unread in Washington. Instead, policymakers in need of help read that group of writers who used rather than attacked Johnson's analysis and came to be known as revisionists. Those writers, identified in these pages by Ivan Hall, include "journalists Karel van Wolferen and James Fallows, [Johnson], former trade negotiator Clyde Prestowitz, publicist Pat Choate, and others"—and the "others" would certainly include Hall himself.[7] The revisionists had their differences—we will come back to them—but agreed on three fundamental points: First, an extrapolation of late-1980s trends would make Japan the world's pre-eminent economic power around the turn of the century; second, 1945 did not represent a clean slate, and the links between the 1950s and the 1930s were strongest precisely in those institutions that produced the "Japanese Economic Miracle"; and third, formal trappings to the contrary, Japan was not a liberal, capitalist democracy in which crucial decisions were made by politicians accountable to an electorate, while the market determined economic outcomes. Rather, power rested in an official bureaucracy not subject to political control and in an unofficial bureaucracy of linked banks, large industrial corporations, and trading companies free of the normal disciplines of a market economy: the fear of bankruptcy, suppliers' freedom to negotiate fair prices, and the pressure to compete for scarce financing through demonstrating an ability to turn a profit.

With the exceptions of Johnson and Hall, none of the revisionist writers had the credentials that, in the eyes of America's academic Japanology establishment, authoritized them to take part in policy discussions.[8] Nonetheless, revisionist notions on the structural origins of Japan's trade surpluses and the powerlessness of its elected officials quickly became the starting point for a new debate on Japan, most visibly in the 1992 presidential campaign and in the early attempts of the Clinton administration to overhaul Japan policy.

Nor was revisionist influence confined to the United States; a slew of similarly-minded Japanese writings soon followed. Among the most important of these are: Noguchi Yukio's best selling *1940 Taisei*, in which the Hitotsubashi University professor and former MOF official demonstrates in relentless detail the origins of Japan's supposedly "unique" economic institutions in measures taken in 1940 to put the economy on a war footing; Ozawa Ichiro's 1993 manifesto, translated into English as *Blueprint for a New Japan*, in which he follows van Wolferen in making the case that establishing political oversight over the bureaucracy is Japan's central challenge; and the writings of economist Nakatani Iwao—particularly his recent *"Japan Puroburem" no Genten*—and Mikuni Akio, the head of Japan's only independent credit ratings agency and a well known establishment gadfly.[9] These men are perfectly capable of working up their ideas on their own and no doubt did so; nonetheless, one would have to be deaf, dumb, and blind in the Japan of today not to be aware of Johnson and van Wolferen, and not simply because the Japanese mass media has succeeded in turning the word *ribijinisuto* (revi-

[7]Ivan Hall "Samurai Legacies, American Illusions", *The National Interest* (Summer 1992).

[8]I was one of the "revisionist" writers condemned for inadequate credentials. In both Japanese and English publications, the British Japanologist Ronald Dore questioned my qualifications to write an article on the implications of Japanese control of global finance for the *Harvard Business Review*.

[9]Noguchi Yukio, *1940 Taisei* (The 1940 System) (Tokyo: Toyo Keizai, 1995); Ozawa Ichiro *Blueprint for a New Japan: The Rethinking of a Nation* (New York: Kodansha International, 1994); and Nakatani Iwao *"Japan Puroburem" no Genten* (The Roots of the "Japan Problem") (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1990), respectively.

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sionist) into an all-purpose label for any critical foreign analysis of Japan. Van Wolferen's latest Japanese language book on the possibilities for achieving democracy there has sold some 250,000 copies to date, an extraordinary achievement for a serious non-fiction book.

Interpreting the Recession

BUT AS THE decade wears on, a long, debilitating, and seemingly intractable recession has cast doubt on at least one revisionist notion: Japan as the unstoppable economic juggernaut. What initially seemed a deliberate and well-managed exercise on the part of Japan's financial mandarins to take steam out of overheated asset markets now shows every sign of having become the first full-fledged deflation within the living memory of anyone under the age of sixty.

This has not gone unnoticed or uncelebrated; to the contrary, scarcely a week has passed during the past four years in which one or another prominent British or American publication has not proclaimed with barely disguised glee the coming collapse of the Japanese economic model. (Journalists associated with *The Economist* have been particularly resourceful in mining this seam; three of them have managed since 1988 to write no fewer than four Japan-will-collapse books).[10] Of course, it is news when a stock market that had accounted for over 40 percent of total global equity capitalization loses more than half its value, when a banking system that boasts nine of the world's ten largest banks finds itself burdened with uncollectable loans amounting to half a trillion dollars, and when repeated attempts to restart the world's number two economy seem to go nowhere.

But the man-bites-dog story in the litany of Japan's economic woes—one resolutely ignored in the English-language media—is just how successful Japan's economic mandarins have been to date in containing a series of crises that would long ago have sunk any Western government. Try to imagine what the American political landscape would look like in 1998 if by then the Dow were at 1800, half of America's banks were technically insolvent, American real estate prices had fallen by an average of 40 percent from today's levels, the unemployment rate exceeded that of the 1975 recession, and there had been no GNP growth for three years.

Some revisionists are unwilling, however, to rest their case by pointing to Japan's crisis-management skills; instead they deny the existence of a crisis. Johnson writes in the introduction to his 1995 collection of essays, *Japan, Who Governs?* (W.W. Norton, 1995) that Japan's persistent recession is "primarily caused by public policies undertaken to discipline speculators and free riders, and also by the beginnings of a *planned* transition from a producer-oriented, high-growth economy to a consumer-oriented, headquarters economy for all of East Asia." The most articulate recent exponent of this view—that what looks from the outside like a crisis is in fact a well-thought out plan to establish Japanese hegemony over the global economy—is Eamonn Fingleton, whose book *Blindside* played a major role in shaping Washington's perceptions of Japan on the eve of the Spring 1995 auto talks.

Fingleton makes an important contribution in linking the Japanese approach to manufacturing costs with overall industrial policy and its essentially political goal of achieving for the country what the late Prime Minister Ohira once defined as "com-

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[10]These are: Bill Emmott, *The Sun Also Sets* (New York: Times Books, 1989); Brian Reading, *Japan: The Coming Collapse* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1992); Christopher Wood, *The Bubble Economy—The Japanese Economic Collapse* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1992); and Christopher Wood, *The End of Japan Inc.* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994).

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prehensive economic security." Fingleton starts with the common observation that profit-killing price wars are a feature of high-fixed cost industries. The classic example is the semiconductor industry; the variable cost component of a semiconductor chip amounts to little more than what one would pay to haul in some sand from a beach. Thus manufacturers who have spent billions building factories will sell their chips, if they must, for prices far below those that reflect costs, in order to recover at least something of their investment.

Fingleton shows how Japanese companies have targeted just such industries for dominance; they have also gone after businesses (e.g., automobiles, consumer electronics) in which Japanese companies can create these conditions for themselves. Industries not easily turned into high fixed-cost businesses (e.g., writing software) are largely left to Japan's trading partners; service industries that cannot translate into global monopolies are, as a matter of policy, starved of capital. Fingleton notes that Japan's famous lifetime employment system effectively forces Japanese executives to treat labor as a fixed cost. Thus, General Motors deals with a downturn by laying off thousands of people, Toyota by squeezing cost reductions out of its plants and suppliers. The same could be said of the implicit requirement that large Japanese manufacturers underwrite the liabilities of their *keiretsu*-linked suppliers. A General Electric can simply stop placing orders; a Toshiba must find ways to keep its suppliers afloat. Competition between a company that makes pricing decisions as if it were in a high fixed-cost business—pricing below costs when needed—and one that prices as if it were in a low fixed-cost business—selling only when profitable—will see the latter, unable to turn a profit, cede market share. Of course, for its strategy to work, the high fixed-cost company must have financial backing prepared to endure long periods without profits; Fingleton joins all his fellow revisionists in highlighting the MOF's central role in guaranteeing the availability of such financing.

Japanese companies have, as a result of all of this, achieved such dominance in so many industrial sectors that, as Fingleton put it, "no advanced Western country can now raise barriers against Japanese goods without causing industrial dislocation in their domestic economies." It is no longer possible to make a complex machine—a Ford Taurus, a Macintosh computer, a Boeing 767—without Japanese components. Japan's savings pool accounts for over half the industrialized world's available capital, giving the country extraordinary leverage, not simply over global finance, but over anything that can be bought, from the services of Washington's best-connected lobbyists to a favorable image among Third World elites.

But having made an unassailable case that Japan has accumulated enormous economic power, Fingleton then implies that the country faces no serious economic challenge. He dismisses the woes of Japan's stock market as deliberately "engineered. . . to effect the transfer of wealth from rich private citizens to corporate Japan." He terms the banking crisis "rumors" useful in creating a public relations facade behind which banks can "conduct a ruthless purge of small-time real estate speculators who could not pay their interest bills." The strain on "lifetime" employment he labels a "red herring"; while the recession itself he calls a "pause" that was "overdue." Indeed, he concludes that by 1994 "Japan was girding itself for a new leap forward."

Fingleton is a well-respected financial journalist and, coming on top of a process that had seen the image of revisionism in Washington move from the kooky to the conventional, Fingleton's conclusions seemed plausible to many. But they jostled for the attention of policymakers with the unending stream of books and articles describing a Japan on the edge of deflationary collapse. Not since the early 1980s, when the Reagan administration portrayed the

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Soviet Union as simultaneously a menace demanding a huge defense build-up and a society bound for the ash-heap of history, had so many seemingly contradictory observations about an important foreign country been bandied about. These contradictions were reflected in policy. The same Clinton administration that launched trade initiatives specifically aimed at compensating for the apparently unbeatable competitive edge of Japanese industries found itself in August 1995 joining Japanese bureaucrats in helping avert what it had been scared into believing was an imminent meltdown of the Japanese banking system.

This policy schizophrenia may reflect simple incompetence. This is, after all, an administration that allowed six months to pass before filling a single important second-tier policy position involving Japan. It appears to rely for its analysis of financial developments in Tokyo on alarmist editorials in *The Economist* and *Far Eastern Economic Review* rather than the views of its own overworked but knowledgeable Tokyo embassy officials. But to the extent White House officials are genuinely puzzled rather than simply overwhelmed, they could benefit from taking another look at the original revisionist writings, in particular at Karel van Wolferen's *The Enigma of Japanese Power* (Knopf, 1989).

Strong State or Stateless Nation?

THE UPROAR surrounding the initial appearance back in 1988-9 of revisionism drowned out a profound difference of opinion within the revisionist camp over the structure of the Japanese political order. Implicit in the work of Johnson, Fingleton, Hall, and Leon Hollerman is the idea that the Japanese political economy is directed and planned from a central core; a core that manages and wages what Hall called "a deliberate, humorless, and relentless economic war"[11] against the United States; a core motivated over the course of centuries, claims Fingleton, by a ruthless "will to win" that single-mindedly judges every conceivable policy agenda with the criterion of "a burning desire to be number one." Johnson, simply and elegantly, calls this core "the strong state." "Lying behind industrial policy is the strong Japanese state itself", he writes. "It is the sine qua non of Japan's economic achievements."[12]

But van Wolferen subtitled his book *Enigma*, "People and Politics in a *Stateless* Nation" (emphasis added). He argued that Japan's modern history had left its governing system with a flaw: the lack of a center of political accountability. The notion of a "truncated pyramid"—that no institutional arrangements exist for formal decision-making binding on all elements of the Japanese power structure—is not new. Indeed, it is a commonplace observation in discussions of the origins of the Second World War in Asia; the lack of such arrangements permitted officers in the Imperial Army, formally answerable to the emperor but in fact answerable to no one, to invade China on their own initiative. Nor has this notion ever disappeared from serious Japanese political discourse; it was stressed by Maruyama Masao, Japan's most important political thinker, and is implied in Ozawa Ichiro's call for Japan to become a "normal country."

It had, however, been largely forgotten in the United States until van Wolferen (who, significantly perhaps, is not American) drew attention to it. Part of this historical amnesia undoubtedly reflected the baleful influence of modernization theory; wishful thinking probably contributed more—after all, what administration would want to believe that it had spent energy and political capital dealing with officials who lacked the power to make and deliver on commitments? But the critical factor in masking from the American policy elite the flaw that van Wolferen analyzed was surely that, for fifty

[11]Hall, p. 22.

[12]Johnson, *Japan: Who Governs?*, p. 66.

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years, Washington has been carrying out for Japan functions that practically define the state: providing for the nation's security and managing its foreign relations.

When he drew attention to it, however, he introduced a subtle and important revision. While Maruyama had noted the absence of a center of political responsibility in discussing the policies of prewar and wartime Japan, van Wolferen believed it more accurate in the postwar period to speak of the lack of a center of political accountability. Accountability happens when people or institutions are forced to explain what they are doing. The demand for an explanation can originate with an electorate, a board of directors, a ratings agency, a fully independent press, a congressional committee, a parliamentary opposition, a disinterested accounting profession, a judicial review. It can even—as with an entrepreneur or dictator—be internally generated. But the demand for accountability disappears in a political system where power is fractured among groups of semi-autonomous official and unofficial bureaucracies who pretend that they do not have power, where bureaucrats write both questions for legislators to ask and answers for ministers to give, where companies and ministries choose their own senior officials without external oversight, where companies own each other, where the gates to the legal and accounting professions are kept deliberately at needle-eye size, and where serious newspapers are muzzled by a news-gathering monopoly of accredited reporters' "clubs" that produce widespread self-censorship. The result, argues van Wolferen, is a system that in its essence is a faction-ridden bureaucracy run amok: deeply conservative, jealous of its prerogatives, unable to admit the possibility of institutional error, lacking the ability to articulate to itself or others what it is doing or why it is doing it.

Van Wolferen's writings were met with even less comprehension than had greeted the work of Johnson, at least in the United States. The notion of a "strong state" might seem alien and suspect, but Americans could at least conceive of tightly organized countries dedicated to global hegemony; they had fought a decades-long Cold War with just such a state. But the idea of a formidable economic power capable of laying waste to the American industrial base and wresting the crown of global economic and financial leadership from the American brow run by bureaucrats who didn't know what they were doing was a notion greeted with incredulity and disbelief. (Notwithstanding a determined and protracted smear campaign by powerful Japanese interests, Van Wolferen's analysis was received sympathetically by many Japanese; respected journals such as *Toyo Keizai* and the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* have recently run essays explaining *akauntabiritei* (accountability) to their readers—but one indication of the extent to which van Wolferen's analysis has penetrated the Japanese consciousness.)

The clearest delineation of the differences between the central core/strong state thinkers and van Wolferen occurred in the pages of this magazine in a linked pair of articles that should top the list of required reading for any government official or business executive who deals with Japan. In the first of these, Leon Hollerman labels the country's central core a "collusive oligarchy" and discusses an array of tactics by which this oligarchy is implementing a strategy aimed at turning Japan into "The Headquarters Nation" for the global economy.[13] Hollerman has devoted many years to analyzing the institutional arrangements by which linked networks of Japanese banks, trading companies, and manufacturers achieve dominance of industrial sectors and establish economic beachheads abroad. He reviews many of these arrangements in his article and concludes that they amount to a well thought out strategy to achieve, if not global economic hegemony, then "comprehensive economic security", which is tantamount to the same thing.

His conclusion seems not only convinc-

[13]Leon Hollerman "The Headquarters Nation", *The National Interest* (Fall 1991).

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ing but inevitable—until van Wolferen asks rhetorically in the following article "Are Japan's strategists gamblers?"[14] Anyone who has ever dealt with Japanese institutions knows that, to the contrary, they are extremely risk-averse. A strategy by which a crowded island nation, bereft of most natural resources, hemmed in by watchful, resentful neighbors, supporting within its borders fifty thousand foreign troops under foreign command, attempts to wrest leadership of the global economy from under the noses of those same foreigners—foreigners who within living memory of much of the nation's elite had stripped it of its empire and reduced its cities to rubble—is, however good the odds may seem and however stupid and gullible those foreigners might have become, a *huge* gamble. But what other than a well-thought out strategy could have secured for Japan its extraordinary economic achievements? Japan might not yet have become the world's "headquarters", but by 1991, when the articles appeared, it looked pretty damned close.

Van Wolferen posited the notion that all those jealous, conservative instincts of institutional self-preservation that, according to observers from Max Weber to James Q. Wilson, define the nature of the bureaucratic beast have acted in the Japanese case to perpetuate a system whose origins lay not in a consciously conceived strategy but in a confluence of historical factors. These included wartime controls that had never been dismantled, the occupation's unwitting emasculation of any power centers that could check the economic ministries, the long and historically unprecedented indulgence of the United States toward Japan, and the obvious need for postwar reconstruction that "required no political discussion." The result was a system whose essence lay in a drive to accumulate production capacity without regard to profitability, consumer welfare, or any kind of clearly articulated understanding of what the capacity was supposed ultimately to buy for Japan.

A Four Year Test

THE HOLLERMAN/van Wolferen diptych appeared in the fall of 1991; the intervening four years have given us about as good a test as we're likely to get of the underlying assumptions. It is still conceivable that Hollerman, Johnson, and Fingleton are right; that Japan's wise and far-seeing economic mandarins are, even as we speak, in the final stages of bringing about the most brilliantly conceived and implemented national strategy in history. Perhaps when *Euromoney* awarded Takemura Masayoshi the title "Worst Finance Minister of the Year", his nominal subordinates grinned at one more testimonial to their unparalleled ability to dupe the *gaijin*. Maybe when Japan's current prime minister, Hashimoto Ryutaro, led a successful lobbying effort before assuming office to gut the official apology the world had awaited on the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, Japan's diplomats and business leaders congratulated themselves for their prescience in getting other Asians used to the subordinate role they will be playing when Japan's "ascendancy" is revealed to East Asia and the world. And it could be that the avalanche of recent books and articles in Japan portraying widespread bureaucratic incompetence point to the devious tactics by which Japan's top officials have hidden all evidence from their fellow Japanese of well thought out plans to bring about that ascendancy.

But I don't think so. Far more likely, the last four years bear out van Wolferen's thesis. Rather than any sort of transition, planned or otherwise, from the postwar setup, these years have witnessed the latest chapter in a quarter century of heroic efforts to preserve the existing system. Mikuni Akio put his finger on the heart of the matter when he wrote:

[14]Karel van Wolferen "No Brakes, No Compass", *The National Interest* (Fall 1991).

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> There were two motives behind [Japan's economic] system. The first was to expand Japan's productive capacity as quickly as possible. The second was to keep control of Japan's productive assets out of the hands of foreigners. The strains in this system first started appearing in the late 1960s, when Japan began running chronic trade surpluses. The result has been constant upward pressure on exchange rates. The increasing value of the yen should have served as a signal to Japan's policy elite that it needed to shift the driving force of the economy from exports to domestic demand. But Japan, alas, has lacked the political infrastructure capable of carrying out such a wide-ranging shift.[15]

The notion that Japan can easily engineer a "transition" to a "headquarters economy" ignores both the lack of this political infrastructure and the extraordinary interdependence of the United States and Japan, an interdependence now critical to maintaining domestic power balances in both countries. It is this interdependence that allows Japan to avoid dealing with the "wide-ranging shift" that economic developments would seem to dictate; it is this interdependence that permits the United States to maintain superpower pretensions and a level of consumption it could not afford on its own. Its essence lies in the role of the dollar in underpinning economic relations between the two countries; and the accumulating strains are, as Mikuni suggests, at their most visible in the history of dollar/yen crises.

These crises—there have been five since the yen was cut loose from the dollar in 1971—all bear a family resemblance, most particularly in the near-hysteria they seem to induce in Japan when the yen soars to previously unimaginable levels. Companies go into paroxysms of cost-cutting and automation financed by easy money as the authorities open the monetary spigots; MOF officials rush to Washington prophesying global collapse unless they get help in bringing down the yen; the Bank of Japan ("BOJ") buys billions of dollars in the foreign exchange market; Japanese insurers and banks are "guided" into joining the BOJ in its dollar buying.

The contention that this hysteria is all a put-up job aimed at forcing Japanese industry to pare costs overlooks the tremendous price that Japan has paid. Japanese institutions have sustained direct losses of a least a trillion dollars in propping up the American currency over the past two decades. The dead weight of bad loans on the books of Japan's banks (and thus the seemingly endless recession) stems directly from a "bubble economy", deliberately created by the MOF to cope with the aftermath of the 1985 Plaza Accord that saw the dollar drop from 240 yen to 140 yen in less than two years.

A willingness to saddle Japan with such burdens can only come from horror at the thought of the alternative: insisting that foreign countries conduct their business with Japan in yen. Countries seeking to finance their government deficits with Japan's savings would have to borrow in a currency Japan could control. Foreigners buying Japanese products would be billed in the currency Japanese manufacturers must use, in turn, to pay their own workforce and suppliers. This is the way the world usually works: Stronger countries—a Victorian Britain, a postwar United States, a reunified Germany in today's Europe—demand that others take the risk that currencies will fall in value, rather than forcing their own businesses and household savers to shoulder such risks by accumulating and holding foreign currencies.

Because the notion of a "headquarters nation" that does not control the currency of its trade and investment flows is ultimately inconceivable, many have assumed it only a matter of time until Japan too establishes such control, giving rise to much talk of the "internationalization of the yen" and the "emergence of a yen bloc." But to date, this has been only talk, for any genuine

[15] Akio Mikuni "A New Era for Japanese Finance", *The Asian Wall Street Journal*, July 2/3, 1993.

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internationalization of the yen—any widespread move to require foreigners to pay for Japanese exports in yen or to borrow in yen—would make it instantly apparent that foreigners do not have sufficient opportunity to earn yen by selling into the Japanese market. Unless foreigners can sell freely into Japan, they cannot earn yen to pay for Japanese goods or service yen debts.

The problem today, however, goes far beyond market access and cannot be solved simply by dismantling Japan's myriad cartels and other market access-blocking mechanisms, although this remains a critical first step. Japan's control of so much of both the world's industrial capacity and its savings has been equaled by only two countries in history: Great Britain in the opening decades of the Industrial Revolution, and the United States in the years following the Second World War. Both faced the same dilemma that Japan does today—the only way to restart domestic economic growth was to create purchasing power in the economies of trading partners. Both countries ended up doing so, but only after crises that shook up their respective political systems. In Britain's case, the crisis was the Irish potato famine. The repeal of the corn laws in 1846, which allowed other countries to earn pounds sterling by selling agricultural produce to Britain, ushered in Britain's golden age, but not before destroying the economic base of the landed gentry. And it was only the postwar threat of militant communism that convinced the United States it had no choice but to promote the rebuilding of production capacity in Western Europe and Japan through such measures as the Marshall Plan.

For Japan to create purchasing power abroad sufficient to reverse its domestic slump it would have to yield a good part of its domestic industrial capacity to others—just as Britain let much of its agricultural capacity go fallow one hundred and fifty years ago, and the United States gave up many of its low-value added industries in the decades following the Second World War. For until the capacity goes in Japan, it will be impossible to finance its rebuilding abroad.

Simply to mention such things points to the dilemma they pose. Foreign goods pouring into Japan terrify Japan's bureaucrats with the prospect of fundamental political challenges to the prevailing order. It is not simply their effects on cozy domestic price-fixing arrangements—the "price destruction" they cause, to use the term coined in Japan for what has temporarily happened in a few narrow sectors such as gasoline, men's suits, and personal computers. To rely on foreigners for important, high value-added manufactures defies the entire weight of the institutional and personal memories of Japan's economic mandarins. And any large-scale scrapping of Japan's existing industrial capacity—capacity which in Japan includes so-called "lifetime" employees—would bring unimaginable political consequences and threaten whatever legitimacy the bureaucrats have. For it is the ability of the bureaucracy to protect the institutions and livelihoods under its purview that justifies its power.

Instead, every few years the yen ratchets up in value. After soaring to unimaginable highs (most recently, ¥79 to the dollar), heroic efforts in Tokyo and Washington stabilize the currency at a rate below the peak but well above the previous plateaus. Japanese companies have been forced to cope by investing heavily overseas, in places where costs are lower.

Because these investments are under Japanese control, they represent the only politically acceptable means in Japan by which purchasing power can be created abroad. But they train another spotlight on the absence of a center of political accountability. Never in history has a country allowed large amounts of its wealth to flow overseas without taking steps to protect that wealth. The U.S. military now protects Japan's overseas investments, but it is unlikely that either the will or the ability to do so can last much longer, notwithstanding the sort of protestations to the contrary embodied in the

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recent Nye Report. Protecting its overseas assets on its own would require Japan to build a political infrastructure capable of overseeing and bridling a military establishment—the missing center of political accountability. But an institution that could not also bring the Ministry of Finance under its thumb would not constitute such a center. Since this most powerful of the world's bureaucracies would meet any attempt to construct an outside force to hold it to account with implacable opposition, no one is seriously trying. It is simultaneously not easy to conceive of a more visible military that would long remain under the budget bureau of the MOF, its current restraint.

What could happen, if despite every desperate measure, the existing order collapses? A final global flight from the dollar, bringing an abrupt end to the Japanese surpluses, might do this. So could a national security challenge to Japan that the United States is unwilling or unable to handle. If forced into a corner, the MOF is likely to prefer sharing power with a rehabilitated military rather than surrendering that power to ordinary Japanese citizens—a prerequisite to establishing genuine political control over the bureaucracy. And it would surely prefer to deal with a Japanese military than to reverse a century-long effort to free Japan from dependence for key industrial components on unpredictable and capricious foreigners, foreigners all too often beyond the reach of the extra-legal guidance and intimidation used to keep order in Japan. But it is precisely such a reversal that is implied in any genuine effort to dismantle bureaucratic controls.

The gloating that lies behind the Japan-is-collapsing school—the Japanese have defied market forces and now market forces are taking their revenge—ignores the fact that Japan represents prodigious economic and political might; Fingleton, Johnson, and Hollerman are absolutely right about this. Just as the Soviet Union did indeed turn out to be headed for the ash-heap of history while being nonetheless a dangerous country, Japan has very real economic woes that do not in any way lessen the immense economic—and thus political—power it has accumulated. Indeed they render that power even more of a threat to the framework of global prosperity. For the lack of a strategy, the absence of a center of political accountability, makes Japan exceedingly difficult to deal with. It is one thing to reach a group of power-holders executing a well-conceived plan to establish their country's "ascendancy" by demonstrating that it cannot work or by negotiating a compromise. But when no such group exists, to whom do you talk? What do you say?

Since Japan first burst into the West's consciousness in 1905 with its victory in the Russo-Japanese War, the West has been unable to make sense of the country. Japan's impact on the history of this century has been unimaginably large. It helped bring about the Russian Revolution and was the direct progenitor of the Chinese. The British Empire ended in the rubble of a fallen Singapore, while the Soviet Union collapsed in the face of an American military build-up financed by Japan. Japanese money permitted the second great American political realignment of this century, as the Republican Party discovered by accident in the early 1980s that it could borrow that money to entice votes. Japan provides the last remaining prop for the dollar's role as the world's currency, and with that role all of America's superpower pretensions.

The concentration of power Japan represents should elicit on the part of America's policy elite a supreme effort toward understanding and coping. Anything else will represent abdication of responsibility on a monumental scale. □

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Less is More

Minimal Realism in East Asia

Christopher Layne

HISTORICALLY, IN BOTH practical and theoretical debates about American foreign policy, the great divide has been between proponents of liberal internationalism—sometimes called Wilsonianism—and realism. But today, although more or less pristine strands of neo-Wilsonian liberal internationalism survive in the foreign policy discourse, the more important intellectual debate is taking place *within* the realist camp itself. Today's realists are split into "maximalists" and "minimalists", with the latter often caricatured as neo-isolationists. While both camps share fundamental assumptions about the forces that shape world politics, once it comes to specifics the two generate very different views as to what U.S. grand strategy ought to be. One can therefore no longer speak meaningfully about *a* realist critique of liberal internationalism, for realism today does not offer a unified alternative to liberal internationalist policies.

To complicate things further, while their basic assumptions differ, maximal realists sometimes find themselves in accord with liberal internationalists. To take one important current example, both have tended to favor American military intervention in the Balkans. On the other hand, minimal realists sometimes *do* find themselves more in accord with isolationists than with maximal realists—and again the Bosnia debate illustrates the point. Hence, the schism between maximal and minimal realists merits close attention.

The basic difference between the two camps, understood as ideal types, is not hard to state: It is between those who would trust in hegemonism and those who would trust in the balance of power, these being the only two pure models of international stability that scholars have ever gleaned from the study of history. Maximal realists put their money on hegemony—or as much of it as they can get under specific circumstances—and assume that, as it will be American, it will be a benign hegemony. They seek U.S. security through the preservation of maximum feasible American military and geopolitical dominance over the international system. Minimalists, on the contrary, advise that the United States should seek security by capitalizing on the dynamics of the balance of power in an emerging multipolar world. They do so because they believe that the United States lacks the resources to sustain its present predominance, and, more fundamentally, because they see hegemony as inherently unstable.

Both maximal and minimal approaches are realist strategies because they embrace the core assumptions of the realist paradigm: anarchy among states requires and justifies self-help; reasons of state predominate over conventional interpersonal standards of

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moral behavior; and power relationships predominate over internal political characteristics in determining state behavior. But maximal and minimal versions of realism today do not generate equally realistic strategies. The operational differences between them may be demonstrated by considering their respective implications for future U.S. strategy in East Asia, and after first considering the two positions—maximal and minimal realism—in general theoretical terms, I shall do this. It will be my contention that minimal realist approaches offer by far the more realistic options for the United States.

Maximal Realism: The Strategy of Preponderance

REALISM CAN BEST be understood by contrasting it with the liberal internationalism that represents the prevailing popular approach to world politics among the elites of Western democracies. In its unadulterated form, liberal internationalism boils down to the assumption that a virtuous cycle binds together democracy, economic interdependence, and peace. Its enemies are authoritarianism, narrow nationalism, and excessive reliance on the use of force as a policy instrument. It aspires to apply the rule of law to state interactions, and, while not necessarily utopian, is quick to spot and to advocate potential systemic change, presumably for the better.

Realists see things differently; in particular, they are skeptical of any easy prospect for benign systemic change. If history is "just one damned thing after another", then for realists international politics is the same damned things over and over again. War, great power security and economic competitions, the rise and fall of empires and great states, and the formation and dissolution of alliances are, in this view, ceaseless and changeless at the same time. The number of permutations is virtually infinite, but the rules by which they are generated are fixed by human nature and the hard realities of political life.

The realist paradigm explains why this is so. International politics is an anarchic, self-help realm because there is no central authority to make and enforce rules of behavior on states. The absence of such an authority means that each state is responsible for ensuring its own survival, free to define its own interests and to employ means of its own choosing in pursuit of those interests. International politics is therefore fundamentally competitive. While this competition is not necessarily chaotic or disorderly, states cannot escape the security dilemma, in which the fear and distrust of other states is normal and usually reciprocal. The imperative of survival thus forces states to adopt strategies that maximize their military and economic power relative to their rivals.

Unlike liberal internationalism, realism is not an uplifting approach to international politics. Owen Harries has nicely captured its flavor:

> Realism is a dour and pessimistic doctrine, one that stresses the inevitability of conflict, the intractability of interests, the dangers of life in a world of sovereign states. The virtues it most strongly recommends are prudence and vigilance.

On this all realists agree, and therefore conclude that, international politics being the way it is, security must be the overarching goal of American strategy. But that is where agreement ends.

It is a commonplace, but nonetheless true, observation that the Soviet Union's collapse transformed the bipolar post-1945 international system into a unipolar one, with the United States as the sole great power. Maximal realists believe that U.S. post-Cold War strategy should aim at perpetuating unipolarity by preventing the rise of new great powers. This is because, they further assume, American hegemony will guarantee a stable international order based on America's power *and* its liberal values. Maximalists usually combine realist concerns about power with liberal internationalism's core policy agenda. In other words, the stabi-

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lizing qualities of the hegemon aside, maximalists assume that other states will accept the leadership of a more or less benign, liberal hegemon such as the United States because of the collective goods—general security reassurance, predictable "rules of the game", and an open international economic system—they would receive in exchange. Unlike true liberal internationalists, who believe that liberalism inevitably will triumph of its own accord, maximalists believe that only American power can ensure that liberal principles will prevail. And they view liberal internationalist principles instrumentally rather than ideologically: democracy and free trade are good because they are means to a desirable end—a high degree of security for the United States in the international system—not the other way around.

Maximalism's contemporary intellectual framework can be parsed from both the writings of its leading proponents and from official policy statements penned during the Bush and Clinton administrations. Perhaps the strongest statement of the key premise—that American strategy should aim to preserve the United States as the sole great power—comes from the leaked and subsequently notorious draft of the FY 1994-9 *Defense Planning Guidance*, prepared in 1992. That document stated that the United States "must account sufficiently for the interests of the large industrial nations to discourage them from challenging our leadership or seeking to overturn the established political or economic order", and that the United States "must maintain the mechanisms for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role."[1] Maximalists believe that, having emerged from the Cold War in a pre-eminent geopolitical position, America's security requires maintenance of that position. As Samuel P. Huntington puts it: "States pursue primacy in order to be able to insure their security, promote their interests, and shape the international environment in ways that will reflect their interests and values."[2]

Maximalists generally prescribe a two-pronged strategy to maintain American dominance: *Geopolitically*, the United States should maintain, and if necessary extend, security guarantees to Europe and East Asia in order to negate the incentives that might push eligible states to become great powers; and *ideologically*, it should encourage the spread of democracy and the preservation (and expansion) of an open international economy because democracy and interdependence conduce to peace.

As to the first part of this strategy, maximalists favor U.S. geostrategic predominance because they believe that the rise of new great powers would destabilize the international order. "U.S. leadership", former Pentagon official Zalmay Khalilzad typically argues, "would be more conducive to global stability than a bipolar or a multipolar balance of power system."[3] Maximalists appear to believe that the alternative to U.S. predominance is a return to a mechanistic eighteenth/nineteenth century balance of power system, a system which they see as flawed because it requires subtle diplomatic calculations and compromises to function effectively. The current debilities of operating such a balance, as maximalists see it, are many. The main fear is that any diminution of American power or retraction of U.S. security guarantees would result in the "renationalization" of foreign and security policies, notably in the cases of Japan and Germany.[4] If these states ever doubted the U.S. capacity to defend them, the argument goes, they would

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[1]Quoted in Patrick E. Tyler, "U.S. Strategy Plan Calls for Insuring No Rivals Develop", *New York Times*, March 8, 1992, p. A1.

[2]Samuel P. Huntington, "Why International Primacy Matters", *International Security* (Spring 1993), p. 70.

[3]Zalmay Khalilzad, "Losing the Moment? The United States and the World After the Cold War", *Washington Quarterly* (Spring 1995), p. 94.

[4]See Robert Kagan, "A Retreat From Power?" *Commentary* (July 1995), pp. 23-4.

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act unilaterally to ensure their security, in turn fueling their neighbors' insecurity and triggering destabilizing regional security competitions. Widespread nuclear proliferation would be the inevitable consequence of multipolarity and concomitant renationalization.

The adverse consequences of multipolarity can be averted, maximalists believe, if the United States maintains intact in the post-Cold War era the Cold War system of alliance arrangements that provided credible security guarantees to Japan and Germany. Official U.S. government documents make the same argument. As the 1992 *Regional Defense Strategy* document states: "It is not in our interest . . . to return to earlier periods in which multiple military powers balanced one against another in what passed for security structures, while regional, or even global peace hung in the balance."[5]

As to the ideological dimension of maximalist thinking, its proponents see a synergy between liberal values and American primacy. American primacy, they believe, creates the kind of stable international system conducive to the spread of democracy and free trade. And, in turn, as democracy and free trade expand abroad—"enlarging the zone of peace"—America's security is thereby increased. Maximalists thus embrace a broad conception of American interests because they see U.S. strategic, political, economic, and ideological aspirations as inextricably linked.

This view has found ample official expression. As President Bush said in his January 1992 State of the Union address: "[T]he world trusts us with power—and the world is right. They trust us to be fair and restrained; they trust us to be on the right side of decency. They trust us to do what's right." The *Regional Defense Strategy* sings the same song: "Our fundamental belief in democracy and human rights gives other nations confidence that our significant military power threatens no one's aspirations for peaceful democratic progress." The Clinton administration carries on the tradition. Although it emphasizes the liberal internationalist component of U.S. strategy more than did the Bush administration, there is substantial congruence in the two administrations' declaratory policies. As the Clinton administration's *National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement* states:

> We believe that our goals of enhancing our security, bolstering our economic prosperity, and promoting democracy are mutually supportive. Secure nations are more likely to support free trade and maintain democratic structures. Nations with growing economies and strong trade ties are more likely to feel secure and to work toward freedom. And democratic states are less likely to threaten our interests and more likely to cooperate with the U.S. to meet security threats and promote free trade and sustainable development.[6]

The Minimalist Alternative

CLEARLY, MANY PEOPLE—officials and scholars alike—agree with the premises of the maximalist argument. Nevertheless, that argument is wrong. The maximalist strategy of preponderance raises several questions. Three are central.

First, even if it is desirable in the abstract, is such a strategy viable? In other words, can U.S. unipolarity be preserved? The strategy of preponderance is the geopolitical analog to the hegemonic stability theory favored by many international political economists. Minimalist realists, however, suggest that international politics is shaped strategically by what could be called the hegemonic *in*stability theory. In a unipolar world, systemic factors—anarchy, reciprocal security fears, concerns about the distribution of relative power—should impel states

[5] *Regional Defense Strategy*, p. 6.

[6] William J. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement* (Washington, DC: The White House, 1995), p. i.

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that can do so to act to counterbalance a hegemon. A hegemon's attempt to perpetuate unipolarity thus will have the paradoxical effect of accelerating the emergence of new great power challenges to it.

Second, in its security dimension, the strategy of preponderance could require an ambitious expansion of U.S. extended deterrence strategy. But can the preconditions that allowed for successful deterrence in Central Europe during the Cold War be replicated in the post-Cold War world? What are the costs and risks of a post-Cold War extended deterrence strategy? It is not at all clear that the United States can—or should wish to—maintain the sort of security guarantees to Japan and Germany required to prevent renationalization and multipolarity.

Third, do liberal values really contribute as much to American security as maximalists suggest? In particular, is American liberalism so powerful as to inculcate a widespread belief in American exceptionalism abroad? If not, American power will not be seen as benign by significant others. Moreover, the liberal internationalist component of maximal realism may blind policymakers to the possibility that other *democratic* states may threaten American interests, if not through war than through other forms of competition. And, because they are committed to promoting economic interdependence, maximalists may overlook the importance of *relative* power.

In contrast to maximalism, a minimalist grand strategy would cast the United States in the role of an offshore balancer. Rather than attempting to suppress the rise of new great powers, a minimalist strategy would navigate multipolarity to maintain U.S. security by: (1) exploiting the U.S. position as a secure, relatively powerful, insular great power; (2) relying on global and regional power balances to contain newly emerging powers; and (3) increasing America's relative power position by taking advantage of the economically debilitating security competitions that newly emerging powers (who are America's economic rivals) must undertake, and by devising a more assertive national economic strategy designed to revitalize America's relative economic power.

Maximalism in Practice—East Asia

HAVING SET OUT the two realist positions in theoretical terms, I now turn to how they differ in practice by contrasting their views on several specific issues in the East Asian context: unipolarity; extended nuclear deterrence and selective nuclear proliferation; economic interdependence and the importance of *relative* power relations; and the role of ideals in U.S. policy.

Current U.S.-East Asia strategy, conveniently set out in a February 1995 Pentagon document, rests on the premise that U.S. vital interests, increasingly defined in economic terms ("the stability and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region is a matter of vital national interest affecting the well-being of all Americans") require a strong American military presence in East Asia. Absent that presence, the destabilizing things maximalists predict of multipolarity will happen:

> If the United States does not provide the central visible, stabilizing force in the Asia and Pacific region, it is quite possible that another nation might—but not necessarily in a way that meets America's fundamental interests and those of our friends and allies. Insecure nations will build up their armaments. Arms races could in turn foster fear and instability.[7]

Extended nuclear deterrence is a key part of the strategy. Stating that the United States is "reconfirming the nuclear umbrella it extends to its allies", the Pentagon aims to avert the renationalization of Japanese for-

[7] *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, Office of International Security Affairs, February 1995). The quotes that follow are from this document.

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eign and security policy. Thus the U.S.-Japan security treaty is lauded because "it contributes to overall regional security. The United States-Japan alliance, while mutually beneficial, has far-reaching benefits extending to the maintenance of peace and stability of the entire international community."

To round out the maximalist panoply, the Pentagon's East Asia strategy paper stresses the linkage between America's security and its values:

> United States interests in the region are mutually-reinforcing: security is necessary for economic growth, security and growth make it more likely . . . that democracy will emerge, and democratization makes international conflict less likely because democracies are unlikely to fight one another.

So much for the official line. What are the realities of contemporary East Asia, and how have maximalist realists interpreted them?

Over the past several years, many U.S. observers have begun to focus on the strategic implications of China's rise to great power status. Several incidents have strained Sino-American relations and suggest to many that China is becoming a more assertive power in East Asian geopolitics. These include: an October 1994 Yellow Sea incident involving *USS Kitty Hawk* and a Chinese nuclear attack submarine; China's January 1995 seizure of some of the disputed Spratly Islands; Beijing's expulsion of two U.S. military attachés on espionage charges; the arrest of human rights activists Harry Wu and Wei Jingsheng; and especially the growing tension between Beijing and Washington over Taiwan. China is also engaged in a significant military build-up and has undertaken a domestic campaign to bolster nationalist sentiment by playing on memories of the 1937-45 war against Japan. China's leadership now views the United States as unremittingly hostile, and, in a major policy reversal, for the first time in a quarter century China no longer welcomes the U.S. military role in East Asia. Rejecting the American portrayal of itself as an impartial balancer in East Asia, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen declared in August 1995: "We do not recognize the United States as a power which claims to maintain the peace and stability of Asia."

Many American realists have identified China as a major emerging threat to several important U.S. security interests and are asking whether Washington's best response is to "engage" China or to "contain" it. The Clinton administration's policy, as set out in the Pentagon document, is to "engage China and support its constructive integration into the international community. . . ." Arthur Waldron has stated the opposing view:

> From now on the Asian security situation will increasingly resemble that of inter-war Europe: a society of strong nation-states, increasingly well-armed and in possession of conflicting visions of the future, and in the shadow of an erratic and sometimes menacing power. . . .[U]nless the United States begins to see things as they are, and to play an active role in deterring China and shaping Asian affairs, it will pay the eventual and possibly catastrophic price.[8]

Waldron also delicately alludes to the likely renationalization of Japanese policy if the U.S. fails to contain China: "Japan . . . will reconsider its role." Just in case worse comes to worst, the American national security establishment already is conducting war games that simulate a Sino-American war in 2010.

In truth, however, the United States faces not one great power challenge in East Asia but two. While China's great power emergence has attracted intense discussion, far less attention has been focused on Japan's even more stunning rise to the threshold of great power status. Few Americans think of Japan as a military power, but it is on the

[8]Arthur Waldron, "Deterring China" *Commentary* (October 1995).

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verge of becoming one just the same. Japan has the world's third largest defense budget, very well-equipped and trained forces, and a sophisticated high-tech defense industry. It is already a virtual nuclear power, a point dramatized in 1992-3 by Japan's importation of large amounts of plutonium. Japan could, if it wished, build warheads and mount them on intercontinental-range delivery vehicles (the H-2 missile, ostensibly developed for launching satellites) in a matter of weeks. Unwilling to remain dependent on the United States, Japan is now developing an independent capability to gather and analyze politico-military and economic intelligence.

Japan's great power emergence is reflected most dramatically and obviously, however, in its economic prowess. When the dollar reached its most recent (mid-April 1995) nadir in relation to the yen, Japan's GNP was just two-tenths of a percent less than America's—a remarkable accomplishment for a country with few natural resources and half of America's population. This comparison of respective economic power is somewhat exaggerated because it reflects an overvalued yen and undervalued dollar, but even before the yen's 1995 appreciation, respected international economists were forecasting that sometime in the next century's first decade Japan's GNP would exceed America's. If Japan does surpass the United States as the world's leading economic power it would be a fact of enormous *strategic*, not merely economic, importance. As Paul Kennedy has noted, throughout international history "economic shifts heralded the rise of new Great Powers which one day would have a decisive impact on the military/territorial order."[9] It is impressive testimony to the power of liberal internationalist beliefs that Washington remains largely oblivious to the emergence of Japan as a great power rival. After all, according to that doctrine a supposed free-market democracy such as Japan cannot be a geopolitical rival.

As for the maximalists, their views of Japan are ambivalent. Most of them, most of the time—Huntington being a notable exception—are unconcerned about the ongoing shift in economic power between the United States and Japan because they see economic interdependence as mutually beneficial. At the same time they stress the danger of Japan becoming an active great power should the United States withdraw its security umbrella. Thus, they worry about atmospherics—the fear that trade frictions could erode U.S. public support for maintaining the security relationship with Japan, a relationship they would not jeopardize by pressing Tokyo too hard on bilateral economic issues. Some maximalists are so frightened by the prospect of Japan as a great power that they would even abjure pressing it for a greater degree of strategic reciprocity and increased military burden sharing.[10] For all maximalists, however, the U.S. security guarantee to Japan is vital because it prevents the emergence of the dreaded condition of East Asian multipolarity. Multipolarity challenges strategic planners because a state can be threatened by more than one adversary, it is often unclear which potential rival constitutes the most salient threat, and complex judgments must be made about the interplay of rivals' power, intentions, and the timeframes in which power and intentions may intersect.

Over time, China could emerge as a very formidable adversary, but such a possibility hinges on three highly-problematical assumptions: that China maintains its domes-

[9]Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict From 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987), p. xxii.

[10]Richard K. Betts, "Wealth, Power and Instability: East Asia and the United States after the Cold War", *International Security* (Winter 1993/94), pp. 56-64; and Aaron L. Friedberg, "Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia", *International Security* (Winter 1993/94), pp. 31-2.

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tic political cohesion; that it can sustain for a prolonged period its current high (approximately 12 percent per year) growth rates; and that it can equal or surpass the United States in military technology, organization, and doctrine. In contrast to China, Japan has already established leadership in key high-technology sectors, possesses tremendous financial and manufacturing clout, has highly advanced actual and latent military capabilities, and has a GNP that is closing in on America's. And unlike China, Japan's underlying political stability and internal cohesion are not in doubt.

China *may* become a threat over time; Japan *will* become a great power rival in the short term. For that eventuality the United States needs a realistic strategy. Neither global internationalism nor maximalist realism can provide one because their assumptions blind them to the challenge Japan poses. Minimalist realism, however, can provide a realistic strategy.

Impractical, Costly, and Dangerous

MAXIMAL REALISM has obvious appeal because its arguments are emotionally attractive and intuitively plausible. It is not hard for Americans to believe that a benignly motivated America is good for the world, and that America itself would be safer—strategically and ideologically—in a world where its primacy is unchallenged by other great powers. Maximal realists are almost certainly correct in assuming that international politics will revert to more traditional patterns of behavior if the United States is unable to stymie the rise of new great powers. A maximalist strategy is also attractive because it promises to dampen incentives for nuclear proliferation and may therefore contribute to avoiding nuclear war in East Asia. Who could oppose that?

These appear to be compelling arguments, but appearances can be deceiving. Minimal realists reject the maximalist strategy because it is impractical, costly, and dangerous.

The strategy of preponderance is an *impractical* strategy because, over time, the United States cannot successfully perpetuate unipolarity by thwarting the emergence of new great powers. America's post-Cold War "unipolar moment" is an ephemeral geopolitical aberration. The emergence of these new powers is a recurring feature in international politics that reflects both the impact of differential growth rates among states and the logic of the system. The relative distribution of power among states is constantly, if slowly, changing; Japan's closing in on the United States in terms of GNP provides a concrete example. And the structural effects of anarchy compel states that possess the requisite capabilities to become great powers. States have virtually irresistible incentives to acquire the same kinds of capabilities that their rivals (actual or potential) possess, even in cases, such as Japan's, where historical memory militates against it.

Another key structural effect is the tendency of states to balance against others who are too strong or threatening. The pressure to balance is especially strong in a unipolar system, as modern international history amply confirms. Maximal realists, however, assuming that their own belief in American exceptionalism is shared by the rest of the world, believe that this will not apply in the case of the United States. Instead of challenging America's hegemony, they argue, other states welcome it because they trust the United States to exercise its power fairly and wisely.

This is an illusory view of how others perceive American hegemony. Hegemons may love themselves but others neither love nor trust them; other states are concerned more with a hegemon's fixed capabilities than its ephemeral intentions. Thus, any strategy aimed at suppressing the emergence of new great powers will instead stimulate the rise of challengers. It may be true, as Huntington argues, that a "state such as the United States that has achieved international primacy has every reason to attempt to main-

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tain that primacy", but it is equally true that other states with the capabilities to do so will work to create counterweights to American overbearing power.

The strategy of preponderance is also a *costly* strategy because the balancing and reassurance roles prescribed require the United States to remain the leading military power in East Asia—and, indeed, in the world. Maximalist realists focus on the benefits of U.S. unipolarity, but they overlook the costs. As Robert Gilpin has pointed out, the "overhead costs" of empire are high, and the basic dynamic is familiar enough. Over time, hegemons decline from dominance because the costs of sustaining preeminence erodes the hegemon's economic strength. The hegemon's presence abroad also results in the diffusion of economic, technological, and organizational skills to other states, eventually reducing its comparative advantage over them. Invariably, some of these other states will emerge as rivals.

A strategy of *benign* hegemony does not change the equation appreciably. Such a strategy enables other states to "free ride" militarily and economically, allowing them to shift resources into economically productive investments. The net result is the same: the decline in the hegemon's relative power. Hence, by providing regional security—for the express purpose of obviating the need for others to provide for themselves—the U.S. strategy of preponderance will accelerate the decline in America's relative power position vis-à-vis Japan, which will continue to exploit the U.S. security umbrella to follow its aggressive, politically motivated "trading state" policies.

Finally, as the post-Cold War strategy of preponderance calls for the United States to reprise in East Asia its Cold War extended nuclear deterrence policy, it is *dangerous*.

Extended nuclear deterrence has always been a difficult strategy to implement successfully because deterring an attack on one's allies is harder than deterring an attack on oneself. This is doubly true when the potential aggressor is a nuclear power because, as Charles de Gaulle reasoned well, rational states will not risk suicide to save their allies. For both protector and protected, extended nuclear deterrence raises constant and ultimately insoluble dilemmas of credibility and reassurance.

The conditions that contributed to successful extended nuclear deterrence in Cold War Europe do not exist in post-Cold War East Asia. Unlike the situation that prevailed in Europe between 1948 and 1990—which was fundamentally stable and static—East Asia is a volatile region in which all the major players—Japan, China, Korea, Russia, Vietnam—are candidates to become involved in large-scale war. There is no clear and inviolable status quo. The lines of demarcation between spheres of influence are already blurred and may well become more so as Chinese and Japanese influence expand simultaneously, increasing the number and unpredictability of regional rivalries. The status of Taiwan, tension along the 38th Parallel in Korea, conflicting claims to ownership of the Spratly Islands, and the Sino-Japanese territorial dispute over the Senkaku Islands are only a few of the flashpoints that could ignite a great power war in East Asia. Washington will clearly exercise far less control over the policies of East Asian powers than it exercised over America's European allies during the Cold War. Hence, the risk of being chain-ganged into a nuclear conflict are much higher for the United States in post-Cold War East Asia if it maintains or extends nuclear guarantees to any of the region's major states.

Even more important, post-Cold War East Asia simply does not have the same degree of strategic importance to the United States as did Europe during the Cold War. Would the United States risk a nuclear confrontation to defend Taiwan, the Spratlys, or Senkaku? Knowing that they would not constitute the same kind of threat to U.S. interests that the Soviet Union did, future revisionist East Asian powers would probably be more willing to discount America's credibility and test its resolve. The presence of American forces in the region may indeed have the per-

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verse effect of failing to preserve peace while simultaneously ensuring the United States would be drawn automatically into a future East Asian war. They could constitute the wrong sort of tripwire, tripping *us* rather than deterring *them*. Notwithstanding current conventional wisdom, the United States should encourage East Asian states—including Japan—to resolve their own security dilemmas, even if it means acquiring great power, including nuclear, military capabilities.

Reconfiguring American security policies anywhere in the world in ways that, in effect, encourage nuclear proliferation is widely seen as irresponsible and risky. This is not necessarily the case. Nuclear proliferation and extended deterrence are generally believed to be flip sides of the same coin, in the sense that providing the latter is seen to discourage the former. Nearly all maximalists are simultaneously proliferation pessimists (believing that any proliferation will have negative security implications) and extended nuclear deterrence optimists (believing that extended nuclear deterrence "works"). But this formulation comes apart from both ends in East Asia: Potential nuclear powers in the region are unlikely to act irresponsibly and, as suggested above, the U.S. nuclear umbrella is of uncertain credibility in post-Cold War circumstances in which the Soviet Union no longer exists and strains in the U.S.-Japanese relationship are manifest.

Even selective proliferation by stable, non-rogue states admittedly raises important political, strategic, organizational, and doctrinal issues. But so does relying on America's nuclear extended deterrence strategy in changed circumstances. The need at hand is to weigh the dangers imbedded in an extended deterrence strategy against those posed by the possibility of nuclear proliferation, and here the Japanese case provides the most important and sobering illustration.

Clearly, most of the concerns about proliferation that maximalists hold are inapplicable to Japan. Japan is not a rogue state, but a highly stable political system with a firm pattern of civil-military relations in which civilian primacy is unchallenged. On the technical side, Japan has both the technology and the resources to build an invulnerable, second strike deterrent force, thus contributing to crisis stability by muting a potential adversary's incentives to pre-empt in crisis. No one seriously doubts that Japan could develop command-and-control systems at least as sophisticated as our own to ensure against accidents, unauthorized use, or terrorism. And while the dangers of Japanese proliferation are more modest than commonly supposed, the risks to the United States of maintaining its nuclear umbrella are greater.

In short, for the United States, some nuclear proliferation may be preferable to pledges of extended deterrence in circumstances in which credibility would be low compared to the dangers of catalytic war. Retracting the nuclear umbrella from Japan would, it is true, set off a chain of foreseeable—and unforeseeable—events. But if the guarantee is left in place and deterrence should fail, that, too, would lead to a chain of unforeseeable—and all-too-foreseeable—consequences. On balance then, the risks to East Asians might rise even as the dangers for the United States shrink. It is not a simple matter, but inasmuch as the preeminent goal of U.S. foreign policy is the security of the United States, the choice in such circumstances is clear.

Off-Shore Balancing—A Minimalist Strategy

THE BEST STRATEGIC response to both the near and longer-term threats in East Asia is a minimalist grand strategy having two components: an off-shore balancing strategy that relies on the natural dynamics of the balance of power to maintain basic geopolitical equilibrium in the region; and a vigorous U.S. economic policy that focuses on the relative power relationship among the United States and its actual or potential competitors.

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Offshore balancing is the military strategic component of the minimalist program. It is the classic response for insular great powers confronting two potential peer competitors in the same region. Because of its relative immunity from external threat, the United States could rationally adopt buck-passing strategies that force others to assume the risks and costs of "going first" in East Asian security affairs.

Maximalists argue that the United States is incapable of playing this kind of balancing role. However, they conflate the unusually explicit diplomatic practices of eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe with the operation of a more historically normal balance of power system. In international politics, power balances tend to form naturally because states are highly motivated to ensure their survival. The United States need not engage in politico-military micro-management, or enter into constantly shifting alliances, for balancing to work effectively in East Asia. The East Asian powers are located in an area with many potentially powerful actors, including "middle powers" such as Korea and Vietnam in addition to emerging great powers. These states are likely to be kept in check by their own rivalries. It is true that timely and effective power balancing sometimes fails to emerge. For that reason, the United States must be ready to step in if necessary. But there is a big difference between being the balancer of first resort and the balancer of last resort, and insular great powers like the United States have the luxury of choosing the latter strategy.

The United States would benefit strategically from East Asian multipolarity in two ways. First, forcing others to channel resources from economic development to national security would enhance America's relative economic power. A Japan that internalized its security costs would no longer be able to concentrate as intently on the trading state strategy that gives Tokyo the upper hand in the U.S.-Japan economic competition. As well, Japan and China—America's East Asian geopolitical rivals—would be contained without the United States having to risk direct confrontation with either.

Maximalists object to an off-shore balancing strategy because it would renationalize Japanese foreign policy and amount to a "pre-emptive surrender" of U.S. primacy. There may be a grain of truth here, but it is by no means the whole story. Clearly, by persevering with the maximalist strategy the United States could delay Japan's rise to great power status. Maximalists and minimalists disagree, however, about the issues of timing and cost: How long could the United States retard Japan's great power emergence, and at what harm to America's relative power position in international politics?

In fact, the maximalist strategy will not ultimately prevent the emergence of a militarily self-reliant Japan, and it is even doubtful that American efforts can slow down significantly the process of great power emergence—which, in many respects, was well advanced even before the Cold War's end. Rather, the maximalist approach would leave the United States less well placed to deal with Japan as a great power because it unwittingly accelerates America's relative power decline.

Minimalists see multipolarity as inevitable and, seeking to make the best of it, aim to capitalize on it strategically. Because the clear purpose of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty is to suppress Japan's reemergence as a great power, minimalists would phase out this arrangement. The United States would neither attempt to hold Japan back militarily nor to push it forward. The message would be simple: As a normal great power Japan must confront the realities of its status, assess its security environment, and decide for itself what its military policies should be.

Maximalists criticize such a course because of the geopolitical "instability" that could accompany retraction of U.S. security guarantees, an instability that could lead to the disruption of important U.S. economic links with East Asia. This fear, which per-

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vades maximalist analyses, is succinctly expressed by RAND analyst Thomas E. McNaugher:

> The United States has . . . acquired an enormous economic stake in the region. . . . It needs sufficient *stability* in East Asia to encourage further economic growth, continued *access* to the region's markets and technology, and *security* for its investments and assets in the region.[11]

But this argument stands the conventional approach to interdependence on its head. Instead of maintaining that open commerce leads to greater security, it holds that security arrangements are necessary and justified because they ensure greater commerce. Thus too former Assistant Secretary of Defense Joseph S. Nye, Jr.:

> Political order is not sufficient to explain economic prosperity, but it is necessary. Analysts who ignore the importance of this political order are like people who forget the importance of the oxygen they breathe. Security is like oxygen—you tend not to notice it until you begin to lose it, but once that occurs there is nothing else that you will think about.[12]

Either way, the idea that economic links forged by interdependence foster peace is a myth. Far more often, interdependence of the sort that requires military forces to preserve it generates costly and dangerous strategic commitments. Such commitments do not shrink but expand the frontiers of American insecurity.

Given both its power-political configuration and the rapid changes occurring within individual countries, East Asia is bound to be turbulent in coming years, even if a new regional balance of power mitigates the prospect of major warfare. Any great power that allows its economic fortunes to be tied to a distant and unpredictable region is asking for trouble. Whatever benefits flow from American preponderance and from interdependence must be weighed against the risks of a policy that would make the United States responsible for maintaining peace and security in post-Cold War East Asia. It is irresponsible to consider only the benefits of commitment and ignore virtually all potential costs.

Pursuing Relative Gains

THE SECOND COMPONENT of the minimalist grand strategy is economic. For minimal realists there is no "global economy." International politics is a world divided into competing sovereign states in which the only economies that matter are those of individual states. Although the theoretical world of "economic man" may favor free trade, the real world of international politics is fundamentally mercantilist. Economics does not and cannot exist in an independent realm divorced from politics because wealth is the foundation of a state's strategic power. Viewing economics from a strategic perspective, calculations of *relative* power are at the heart of grand strategy. Because today's ally can be tomorrow's rival, from a strategic perspective the key question about international economic policy is not "Will everyone gain something?" but rather "Who will gain the most?"

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[11]Thomas E. McNaugher, "U.S. Military Strategy in East Asia: From Balancing to Bargaining", in L. Benjamin Ederington and Michael J. Mazarr, eds., *Turning Point: The Gulf War and U.S. Military Strategy* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), p. 236. The official U.S. view is that, "If the American presence in Asia were removed. . .our markets and our interests would be jeopardized. To benefit from the growth and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region, the United States must remain fully engaged economically, diplomatically, and militarily." *U.S. Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region*, p. 9.

[12]Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "The Case for Deep Engagement", *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 1995), p. 91.

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In economics as much as in the domain of national security, great powers—if they wish to prosper geopolitically—are constrained to emulate the successful strategies of their rivals. Japan's approach to economic strategy is clearly different from America's. In part, this reflects the two nations' different historical experiences, political cultures, and social traditions. But it would be unwise to overemphasize national peculiarities because, from the standpoint of international political history, it is the United States that is the oddball. By definition, great powers are powerful states organized for war and trade. Like Japan, history's great powers have always pursued essentially mercantilist international economic policies. Post-1945 America and Victorian Britain stand as important and conspicuous exceptions to this rule, but exceptions nonetheless.

Many analysts of Japan believe that Tokyo's mercantilist policies are intended to enable Japan to supplant the United States as the world's dominant economic power. Japanese economic ascendancy threatens America's national security on several fronts. The U.S. defense industry increasingly depends on Japan for machine tools and high technology items. Issues bearing on American prosperity are increasingly decided by corporate boards and bureaucrats in Tokyo. Indeed, U.S. domestic economic sovereignty has eroded because the United States has become dependent on Japanese capital inflows to finance the deficit.

To meet the Japanese and potential Chinese challenges, the United States needs to rediscover its own tradition of strategic trade—a tradition that can be traced back to Alexander Hamilton's *Report on Manufactures*, and that guided U.S. foreign economic policy for most of this country's history. This means that American fiscal, economic, and trade policies must increase America's relative economic power while simultaneously reducing that of both Japan and China. American economic grand strategy must aim at restoring the United States to the front-runner's position in the race for economic and technological leadership. To work, this strategy must be complemented by macroeconomic policies that create comparative advantages for the United States in the key factors of production. To create comparative advantages, the United States must invest heavily in rebuilding its economy and upgrading its human capital.

Implementing such an economic strategy requires that the United States free itself of the constraining effects of the U.S.-Japan security relationship. Maximalists invoke the purported strategic benefits of that tie as justification for not adopting a more determined economic policy vis-à-vis Japan. This argument was advanced by then-Assistant Secretary Nye, speaking to the Japan Society in New York on May 11, 1995:

> Some have suggested that we use our security ties to twist Japan's arm on trade. Because the U.S. is doing Japan a favor by providing security, so the argument goes, we can use our position for concessions on trade. The tactic may work in the short term, but after a few episodes, Japan might decide to alter its long term strategy so that it could be free from such pressure in the future. . . . To try to use the security relationship for short run tactical gains would only partially meet some particular American interests at the price of jeopardizing more broadly held, long term interests of the American people in a stable East Asia.[13]

This reasoning (the geopolitical equivalent of committing suicide for fear of death) has an *Alice in Wonderland* quality about it: By confronting Tokyo now, Washington risks severe tension with Japan; but, if the United States does not act now to uphold its economic interests, Japan will continue to get relatively stronger. Strategic logic suggests that the time to act is now, thereby preventing the relative power relationship between the United States and Japan from deteriorating further.

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[13]Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Leadership and Alliances in East Asia", p. 7 (text furnished by OSD/ISA).

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Seeing the World As It Is

ALTHOUGH MAXIMALISTS are realists in the sense that they acknowledge the overriding importance of power and interests, their view of the future of international politics after the Cold War is, ironically, every bit as transcendental—and unrealistic—as the most optimistic liberal internationalists. In part, this may be because they buy into the liberal internationalist beliefs that democracies do not fight each other and that economic interdependence leads to peace. But primarily it is because they believe that the Cold War's stability can be perpetuated by American power notwithstanding the fact that the Cold War has ended. Hence they cling to a desire to keep things as they were, to maintain intact the security and economic relationships of the 1948-90 era. Unfortunately, this nostalgia has produced a certain intellectual closemindedness and an intolerance of those—also realists—who suggest that, because the world has changed, American grand strategy must change as well. It is much easier to stifle debate by characterizing alternative strategies as "neo-isolationist" than it is actually to grapple with the difficult task of formulating new policies that respond to the emerging post-Cold War structure of international politics.

Clearly, the 1948-90 period was one of unprecedented stability in America's relations with Japan (and with Western Europe as well). But that stability was a geopolitical fluke, based on a form of bipolarity that induced a state of suspended animation in geopolitical relations among the United States, Western Europe, and Japan. But the unifying effect of a common foe is gone and key Cold War allies are emerging as great powers in their own right. International politics is returning to its normal, multipolar patterns, and America's foreign policy must take account of that. To date, it hasn't. □

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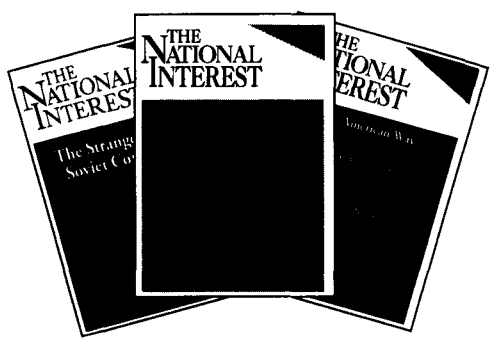

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No Illusions:

Russia's Student Generation

Taylor E. Dark

A CENTURY AGO, the youth of Russia were notorious for their radicalism. By the end of the nineteenth century, their more extreme representatives had pioneered strategies of political terrorism against the Czarist state; attacked and led an ill-fated "crusade to the people" intended to spark insurrection among an allegedly restive peasantry; and embraced versions of Marxism that demanded the total, and if necessary violent, reconstruction of society. In the Bolshevik Revolution, this student generation came to power under the leadership of such figures as Lenin, Bukharin, Trotsky, and Stalin, all former student activists who had been expelled from college or otherwise punished for their radicalism.

As Russia navigates its current time of troubles, the identity of its youth, especially the elite in higher education, takes on greater importance than at any time since 1917. If the political attitudes and behavior of today's young people prefigure the political complexion of Russia in the first decades of the next century, we should take a great interest in knowing whether they are likely to form the vanguard of nationalist extremism or a bulwark of liberal democracy and market economics. My guess, based on recent experience living and teaching in Russia, is that the current generation will promote democracy, not through conscious political action, but rather indirectly through their own economic activities, which will establish a solid foundation for an autonomous Russian bourgeoisie—the great missing link in the evolution of political pluralism in the post-Soviet era.

During the 1994-5 academic year, I taught at Kuban State University in Krasnodar, Russia, a city of about one million located in the northern Caucasus, about four hundred miles northwest of Chechnya. My presence in Krasnodar was arranged through the Civic Education Project, a New Haven-based organization that brings Western social scientists to the former Eastern Bloc to teach courses to English-speaking students and assist in academic reform efforts. Funded in large part by the financier George Soros, and now in its fifth year of operation, the project has sent hundreds of scholars on one to three year stints in locations as widely flung as Ekaterinburg, east of the Urals, to Budapest, and from St. Petersburg to Albania.

My assignment included teaching courses presenting the views of Western social scientists about democracy, nationalism, and the collapse of communism. Although my students were distinctive in that they spoke English, they were in most other respects not unrepresentative of Russian students in general, or even of the larger population of young people.

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My contact with these students, from the classroom to long nights traveling together on trains, and benefiting from the hospitality of their friends and family (with the usual Russian accompaniments of vodka and champagne), left me with conflicting feelings about Russia's future. On the one hand, the cogency and candor with which these students evaluated their own and their country's predicament, and the sophistication of their critique of the old communist order, was little short of brilliant. Yet, their profound sense of fatalism and futility, and their corresponding unwillingness to take political action or to consider politics as anything other than a realm of self-interested corruption, was dismaying. To the extent that they were convinced of the desirability of liberal democracy, they believed that Russia's transition to such a system would take centuries, not decades, and certainly not just a few short years. The immediate future, they believe, will be dominated by bad habits learned over centuries for dealing with Czarist oppression and Bolshevik tyranny: Keep your head down, grab what you can when you can, and hope for the best. Above all, they themselves share a broad reluctance to do anything that might draw the wrath of the authorities down upon them. Missing from their repertoire of expectation is any sense of normal politics, where incremental reforms may be achieved through moderate and self-limiting forms of political action.

Democracy as the Elusive Ideal

FEW, IF ANY, Russian college students are opposed to democracy as such, or are attracted to extremist ideologies of the far left or right. It seems true that many educated Russians have been immunized against totalitarian ideologies by the Soviet experience. The idea of joining any mass party claiming to have the final, exclusive truth about how to organize society attracts few of them. The vast majority of students see leaders such as Vladimir Zhirinovsky as dangerous maniacs, and the old communists fare even worse in their eyes.

Indeed, the students are uncompromising in their criticism of the old regime, and in their judgments about the motivations of its original founders. These views came through clearly in the assignments (written in surprisingly good English prose) that I asked them to complete over the course of the year. "A very tiny group of political swindlers came to power", was a typical characterization of the Bolshevik takeover—a conclusion that, of course, had the additional, salutary effect of relieving the rest of the Russian population of any responsibility for the eventual outcome. These swindlers proceeded to damage the country deeply: "The communist experiment over the country cost rivers of blood, destroying churches, ruining Russian culture to a great extent." Another student concluded: "The youth and middle-aged people don't put any trust in communism. Neither do I. I think communist theory is a kind of departure from the natural course of history." And nearly all would agree with this summation: "The ideas of communism are nonsense. Communists wanted all people to be equal. That's why the time of ruling by the communists was a time of dullness and ignorance."

It is not surprising, then, that most students associate liberal democracy and markets with economic and political progress, and that they want Russia to move in this direction. They know the West has become rich by relying on markets and they are attracted to democracy as a means for protecting individual rights and controlling state power. They tend to view the protection of civil liberties as especially important, since all young people are well aware of the extent to which rights were sacrificed under Soviet power; and the majority seem to have had family members repressed or killed under the old regime.

But these views are tempered by a conviction that although democracy is good, the Russians may not be good enough (yet) for

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democracy. Most are persuaded that Slavs in general, and Russians in particular, suffer from a cultural disposition that prevents them from wholeheartedly embracing democracy. The students display a peculiar form of self-contempt in this respect, often arguing that Russians have an innate desire to be told what to do by an authoritarian figure, that they lack the maturity and mentality needed for democratic compromise and participation, and that they disintegrate into anarchy when not ruled by an iron hand. To them, a Russian is a big-hearted soul with an expressive and spiritual mentality, but congenitally incapable of practicing "normal" politics and economics on the Western model—at least not for a very long time. One student gloomily concluded with a quintessentially Russian remark: "A country which was governed by one or at most several persons for centuries can't become democratic at once. Democracy must be achieved through much suffering, it must be in the blood of several generations."

My students nodded in agreement in response to Alexis de Tocqueville's famous summary of the differences between Russian and American cultures: "The Anglo-American relies upon personal interest to accomplish his ends and gives free scope to the unguided strength and common sense of the people; the Russian centers all the authority of society in a single arm. The principal instrument of the former is freedom; of the latter, servitude." One student insisted that current government policies still reflected this mentality: "Because of the tax system, businessmen waste their efforts trying to conceal their incomes (very often abroad) instead of investing money into industry. It is so typical of Russia—it is easier to *force* them to organize in such a way than to *attract* or *encourage*." Some students also cited the still mandatory courses in military training required for all college men, as well as the persistence of conscription even as the size of the military plummets, as examples of the standard Russian approach that subordinates individuality and rationality to bureaucratic logic and presumptiveness.

Given such views, the students frequently complained that although democracy is the best political system, immature Russia would turn democracy to anarchy, and anarchy, they reason, is probably worse than authoritarianism. (And the wave of mafia terrorism in Russia, with the resulting steel doors on every apartment, lends some strength to their conviction.) Thus, many students ruefully conclude that a non-ideological, non-totalitarian form of authoritarianism is their best bet—an acceptable second choice. Many are attracted to Chilean or South Korean models of development, which, in their view, show how an authoritarian regime can allow private enterprise and some individual freedom, and promote effective economic development in an orderly fashion. Maybe after several decades of a Russian equivalent of Pinochet (although hopefully a less murderous one), the country could again proceed with political liberalization.

Such conclusions suggest that many Russians, convinced that they are not "ready" for democracy, would be secretly relieved not to have to try anymore. The pernicious effects of self-fulfilling or self-denying prophecy cannot be ruled out. Many Russians, including young ones, seem to be waiting for the moment when they can return to the comfortable traditions of servitude, in which they needn't worry about making their own decisions. Then, the country will again be able to do great and glorious things, but, in keeping with Russian tradition, only as a centrally-organized collective.

A classic example of the peculiarities of Russian democracy, and the confused role of students in the current setting, occurred during elections in November 1994 for city and regional assemblies in the Krasnodar region. Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party did well, in large part because a disproportionate share of the voting population was made up of pensioners who had suffered most from

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the collapse of the old order. When I asked my students if they had voted, they replied that they had gone to the voting booths, but had defaced their ballots instead of casting a vote. It turned out that this was intended as a protest against an effort by the university to force students to vote, with the attendant threat to cancel the monthly stipends of those who did not. This effort to coerce backfired, and in one sense revealed the students' latent liberalism: They were convinced that they had the right *not* to vote, and could not accept an effort to coerce them to do so. Yet, their reaction only confirmed their own cynicism. Instead of collectively protesting against the university, they committed individual acts of defiance that undermined one of their few tools for advancing their own political power. And when the election delivered a victory to a rogue alliance of right-wing and left-wing crazies, they all agreed that this showed, once again, that democracy cannot work in Russia.

From Paternalism to Passivity

EVEN THOSE STUDENTS who think that democracy is sustainable in Russia over the next few years are unlikely to actively defend it. Most of my students thought that political action, whether by petitioning the local college administration or becoming involved in a national political campaign, would never accomplish anything. Thus, while they overwhelmingly opposed the war in Chechnya, they seemed to regard protesting against it in public to be inconceivable.

Indeed, there has yet to be a single student protest in all of Russia against the war in Chechnya, a war that has cost the lives of thousands of young Russian men as well as those of thousands of Chechens. Of course, American and West European students are similarly cynical and apathetic about politics, but this reflects the fact that they are not going to be drafted to fight in an unpopular war, and that they benefit from freedoms won in earlier struggles. Neither of these conditions applies to my Russian students; indeed, collective political action probably *could* improve their situation markedly—by, for example, changing laws on conscription and improving their horrid living conditions in the universities. Yet they do nothing.

The mentality of university students in Russia no doubt flows partly from the unremittingly paternalistic manner in which they are treated. If modernity is largely defined by the idea of individuals as autonomous moral agents with the capacity and the right to direct their own lives, then Russian higher education remains thoroughly unmodern. In some senses, the individual Russian student does not even exist. At the beginning of his college career, each student is placed in a group of about ten to fifteen students from his major, with whom he will travel through almost all his classes. Individual students never choose their classes; rather, the group as a whole is assigned to particular courses by university administrators. Locked into an arcane and unfathomable system of scheduling, students are expected to show up docilely. All important decisions about their courses and program of study are made for them, not by them. In practice, this means that students are sent in their little groups to take courses in physical education and military training (or, as in my case, Western political science) whether they like it or not. The idea of "electives" is utterly foreign to all concerned.

The amount of ritualized deference and hierarchy in the university is also extreme. When a professor enters a lecture hall, all students are expected to stand at attention until the professor tells them to be seated. Professors reprimand students for sitting on the tops of their desks, for talking too loudly in the hallway, and for dressing improperly. Once, when the location of my lecture was changed at the last minute, I was instructed by another professor *not* to go into the hallway to look for any lost students. "Professors must never look for the students; only the

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students can look for the professors", I was firmly told. The result was that I was abandoned in a large lecture hall, replete with huge stage curtains decorated with hundreds of hammer-and-sickle designs, gamely waiting for my students to finally show up. The lecture was ultimately canceled and rescheduled for the following week.

Given such attitudes, it is hardly surprising that the university lacks anything but the most rudimentary forms of "civil society." While most Western colleges and universities present a buzzing atmosphere of energy and excitement, Russian universities are boring places. There are few public lectures, evening film showings, musical programs or plays, or even sporting events. There is no student government, no student association, little independent student activity at all. There are school newspapers but they are edited and controlled by the school administration, with only a few articles written by students. In short, the student population is an unstructured mass without intermediary associations, and is completely incapable of expressing its interests through collective action. Not surprisingly, students are regularly victimized—through sudden changes in their tuition or the size of their stipends, inane rules and requirements, and both petty and humiliating treatment by the administration—without even the most minuscule student protest. (The contrast with Latin American university students, who toil in similarly underdeveloped countries, is particularly stark.) All this suggests that Russian students are not about to take to the streets in defense of Russian democracy.

The Weak Pull of Nationalism

IT IS OFTEN suggested that substantial numbers of Russian youth are gravitating toward nasty forms of nationalism, as the crews of young men at Vladimir Zhirinovsky's rallies seem to imply. But in my experience, the only kind of nationalism that appeals to most students is a fairly inclusive, civic variety, which seeks to preserve Russia's cultural heritage and advance its economy and national security—what in other places might simply be called a form of generalized patriotism. Students have no trouble distinguishing between "negative nationalists", who "try to unleash wars and deepen conflicts", and "positive nationalists" who just want "to keep and develop their language, traditions, culture, and history." Relatedly, my students showed no interest in reincorporating the Ukraine or the other former Soviet republics into Russian control, or in launching campaigns to rescue Russian minorities in the newly independent states. Revanchist nationalism is simply not an option; as one student put it: "It's a great problem for our country that nationalism has taken a cruel form and very often degenerates into real fascism. We should get rid of this kind of nationalism."

Skepticism toward nationalism may be a benign legacy of a communist upbringing, but it also exposes the confused nature of students' sense of national identity. "Now Russia doesn't have any national idea at all. After the crash of the Soviet regime, there are not any clear goals for the Russian nation", one student lamented. Growing up in the Soviet Union meant joining the Young Pioneers and learning about the heroic leaders of the October Revolution, whose sublime qualities they were expected to emulate. The Russian state today cannot draw from this reservoir of loyalties and emotions, and the result is a vacuum of evocative symbols; there are no heroic leaders, images, songs, or literature available. Students are wont to be jealous of American patriotism. Americans love to wave their flag, they note, but in Russia, the flag is only a few years old and no one really knows what it means. The paucity of heroes was well-illustrated by the reaction to the recent murder of television personality Vladislav Listev—the closest thing to a hero that many students had.

For all their fatalism and political passivity, student's criticism of Russian culture has

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its limits. If they sometimes feel like doomed members of a dying race (some even compare their fate to that of the American Indians, a comparison that recent demographics suggest might not be entirely absurd), they can still be defiantly proud, filled with the conviction that Russia will return to greatness. Thus, they alternate between harsh criticism of Russian inadequacy and the glorification of distinctive Russian virtues. At times, they fall back on the traditional Russian distinctions between West and East, long seared into the national mythology. The temptation is to argue that despite poverty and backwardness, the Russian soul is not only different, but superior. The shallow and individualistic West, oriented only around material consumption, lacks depth compared to Russia. One only needs to see the awful American movies, the noxious stew of violence and meaningless sex, to understand that the Americans have no authentic deep culture—and it doesn't help that Chuck Norris films and similar "action" movies are the main foreign fare shown in Russian theaters and on television.

Some students argued further that the greatest mistake Russia could make would be to try to mix American and Russian cultures. These are separate, incommensurable paradigms, and to mix them would only give rise to a diabolical mix of problems, with organized crime foremost among them. "I am afraid we are getting the worst possible mix of the Russian and American way of thinking", said one student. "More people nowadays consider that to be rich is the most important thing, no matter how you managed to get rich. Even a crime is all right as a means to get money. And the worst thing is that most of our high-ranking officials, our ministers, [and] deputies possess the same way of thinking." Another student commented: "Now we live somewhere in between communism and capitalism, but the situation around us seems more like anarchy." Perhaps the most common refrain of all is this: "Nowadays the criminal economy has embraced all spheres of activity, as organized crime and shadow businesses reign in the country. This is the legacy which was left by communism. There is crime almost everywhere. . . ."

Few students really buy the full nationalist line about what ails Russia. When I asked one student to write an essay assessing the extent of democracy in contemporary Russia, he responded that I might as well ask how Americanized the country had become. For many, talk about democratization was really just an effort to force Russia to be more like America, or more dangerously, to saddle Russia with an inappropriate form of government that would keep it weak forever. Russia was, to him, a much older, more Christian society with nothing to learn from an upstart America. The main goal of the Americans, in his view, was not to reform Russia but to transform it into a supine colony providing precious and irreplaceable raw materials in return for junk food and junk TV. The most confident of the young nationalists argued that America actually wanted to keep Russia down because it was afraid that Russia would soon become a major economic competitor, as had Japan and Germany after their respective defeats a half century ago.

But, to repeat, Russian nationalism didn't seem to have very deep roots among my students, a fact that clearly reflects its history as a predominantly illiterate peasant-populated multinational empire with a diverse mix of identities. When I told one student about my discomfort with handing out applications for a NATO-sponsored student conference, which included a free trip to Brussels and a tour of NATO headquarters, she agreed that such activities might appear compromising for an academic organization working in Russia, and were probably propagandistic in character. But her very next question was: "How can I get to go?" The West was far more likely to be viewed as an almost magical source of great treasures and entertainment than as a threat to any unique Russian identity.

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For many it is religion rather than nationalism that provides a new source of psychic gratification. For some it is a rekindling of interest in Russian Orthodoxy, but many students are fans of the lively Protestant churches, which, they think, speak more to their needs than the traditional hierarchy of Russian Orthodoxy (and which are just plain more fun). More disturbing to tradition-minded Russians is the popularity of the late L. Ron Hubbard's Church of Scientology and the ever persistent "Unification" Church of Reverend Sun Myung Moon. At times, it almost seemed as if the old Russian penchant for skipping stages of social development was at work once again; just as Russia had tried to skip directly from absolutist monarchy to socialism, so now many Russians seem intent on skipping from communist tyranny to a New Age California metaphysics, bypassing liberal Enlightenment rationality altogether.

Toward a New Bourgeoisie?

DESPITE THEIR RUSSIAN pride, most students do believe that the West, and America in particular, offers new beliefs and practices that would make Russia a richer and freer nation. Whatever their views of democracy, there is no question about their attitudes toward a market economy. They couch their critique of communism in terms that would warm the hearts of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher—two much admired figures. "First of all we should change this attitude toward wealth inside people's brains. We are depraved by seventy years of a communist regime when wealth was somehow the synonym of crime, and when you could live in rather good conditions and get a rather good salary without doing much work." Because of communism, another student concluded, "We forgot how to be responsible for our job, village, city, country. Too long everything in the country used to be the 'people's'—everybody's, which meant nobody's." Due to skewed incentives, people had forgotten how to work:

> Up to the present day, some people are inclined to believe that all they are supposed to do is to come to their office in order to chat for a while with a friend, then to drink a cup of tea, then to smoke a cigarette, then to run through nearby stores to buy something for dinner, then to play a computer game if the office is computerized, and in short breaks between all those things to look through some papers absent-mindedly, only to put them off until tomorrow. And they think it only fair that they should be paid for it.

Moreover, students recognize that those who do work hard must face the inevitable resentment of their peers:

> It is hard for our people to understand that when somebody works for himself, tries to grow rich, he makes his country rich this way. For example, our people are very fond of discussing how much this or that big guy has got, meaning stolen. 'Where did he get that money for such an expensive car (or house)?', they ask, hinting at some criminal sources. And the same people won't even hesitate about pilfering a bag of cement from the factory they work at or selling gas out of their employer's car.

Such comments reflect the wisdom of a generation that has traveled far from the allure of nineteenth-century nihilism and revolution. They are deeply disillusioned and profoundly skeptical of total political revolution and grand economic experimentation. Their concerns now are far more prosaic; they do not want to be avant-garde intellectuals or budding social scientists, but businessmen and professionals. Even while at the university, the more adventuresome students miss class because they go on business trips to Turkey or the United Arab Emirates, where they purchase toiletries, candies, or consumer electronics in bulk to sell on the streets of Krasnodar. Such activity reflects the trading, and more broadly entrepreneur-

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ial, spirit that has been unleashed among the young, many of whom are now opening their own kiosks and forging their own distribution links and, inevitably, reaching their own terms with the local mafia.

One effect of this re-routing of energies away from the political realm is that the Russian political system today is far from "overloaded" with demands from a highly activated society, as has often seemed the case in the West or in Latin America. Students are not protesting, rioting, burning busses or draft cards, or otherwise making a nuisance of themselves. Not that they respect the government or believe that it serves their interests. But they are finding their own way, keeping their heads low, selling Snickers bars down on the corner, and making plans to get ahead.

They lack all utopian ambition, my Russian students, but, given past history, it is hard to conclude that this is such a bad thing. And while Russian student life provides little reassurance about the health or even existence of an autonomous civil society in Russia, the prodigious entrepreneurial energies afoot constitute the central political legacy of the current student generation. It is in the consolidation of a new property-owning class of young people that there may well be laid a more solid and lasting basis for an autonomous Russian civil society than has ever existed before. And, in comparison to the legacy left by their nineteenth-century forebears, this one would be far from a shameful one, especially for a confused but realistic generation, cast adrift from all stable moorings. □

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The Shiprider Solution

Policing the Caribbean

Elliott Abrams

AMERICAN IMPRESSIONS of the Caribbean as a land of rum and beaches are belied by the region's past—and future—as an area of instability. While democracy is deeply rooted in a few countries, its hold is shaky at best in several others. Moreover, several island nations have economies so small and inefficient that they have little to export but their populations. The refusal of Bermudans to vote for independence last year may show that they, at least, have understood the point: *In an increasingly troubled region, reliance on a foreign power for security and prosperity may be the most sensible form of nationalism.* And the only available foreign power is the United States.

Three American Interests

WHILE THERE HAS been continuing debate over foreign adventures throughout American history, there has been little argument over the importance of the Caribbean to American security. The Basin constitutes the coastal waters of the United States, which began trying to dominate it soon after the War of 1812. This was achieved over the course of a century by expelling the Spanish and then overpowering the British. In the process the United States acquired several colonies in the region, including the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, and there were even efforts to annex the Dominican Republic and Cuba. American intervention in Central America and the Caribbean islands has been frequent over the last hundred years, from the Spanish-American War to President Clinton's "permissive" invasion of Haiti. As most of the island Caribbean remained under British rule until very recently, intervention in the English-speaking Caribbean has been limited to Grenada—so far.[1]

U.S. interest in the region long preceded the Cold War, and has not declined since the Soviet collapse. We have one less thing to worry about now—Soviet and Cuban subversion—and a policy of strategic denial is no longer necessary. But there are at least two significant and concrete American interests, and one powerful intangible concern.

The first American interest is migration, which has become an emotional issue in U.S. domestic politics. In the Caribbean, one common reaction to unemployment, local oppression, or violence is to move to the United States. Today, about 18 percent of all

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[1]The English-speaking nations became independent fairly recently. The dates are 1962 for Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago; 1966 for Barbados; 1973 for the Bahamas; 1978 for Dominica; 1979 for St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines; 1981 for Antigua & Barbuda; and 1983 for St. Kitts & Nevis.

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Grenadans live here; 15 percent of Guyanese and Barbadans; 14 percent of Jamaicans. The largest Caribbean communities in numbers are the Cuban, Dominican, Jamaican, and Haitian. If the Caribbean becomes more unstable those communities will undoubtedly grow, for there is already a "culture of migration" in the entire region.[2]

Prior to the 1965 immigration reform law, there were no numerical limits on immigration from the Western Hemisphere. Today, both legal and illegal immigration are sensitive topics—sensitive enough to skew policy toward Cuba and Haiti. It is simply impossible to explain the American insistence on placing Jean-Bertrand Aristide back in power in Port-au-Prince after a military coup ousted him, without noting that his return legitimized the policy of refusing Haitian migrants the right to enter the United States.

Similarly, policy toward Cuba, especially the U.S.-Cuba migration agreement reached in 1995, is only explicable (though perhaps not defensible) in terms of the politics of migration. The decades-old policy of allowing refugee status and automatic admission to every Cuban who landed in the United States was jettisoned and replaced by previously unthinkable cooperation with the Castro regime to prevent unauthorized travel from Cuba to the United States. Why? In large part because the migration issue had become too explosive in domestic, especially Florida, politics to ignore.

The second American interest is drugs. The Caribbean Basin is now a key trafficking route and location for money laundering. Any serious effort to stop or slow the entry of drugs into the United States, or to prevent money laundering, requires a focus on the region that lies squarely between the cocaine-producing countries of South America and the U.S. market.

The third, and less concrete, American interest is in the maintenance of democracy and respect for human rights in this border region. What might be tolerated in distant lands—a government run by merciless thugs or the corrupted allies of drug traffickers—is far less acceptable in our front-yard. A nation that intervenes in far-off Somalia and sends troops to Bosnia is unlikely to ignore massive bloodshed or large humanitarian emergencies so close to home.

Caribbean Instability

THESE CONCERNS MAY seem far-fetched, for the Caribbean has a reputation as a tourist haven where there is little to fear but hurricanes. The image is inaccurate, and democratic stability in the Caribbean is far weaker than most Americans think. If the 1970s and 1980s saw instability and violence in Central America, the late 1990s and the following decades may be the Caribbean's turn. Moreover, unless one is willing to posit a "velvet revolution" for Cuba, that country—the Caribbean's most populous—is likely to experience considerable instability as well, and any violence there will undoubtedly have a direct impact on its nearest neighbor, the United States.

Politically, fifteen of the sixteen Caribbean governments are now formally democracies, with Cuba the only exception. But several are weak democracies at best. When Freedom House's Douglas Payne surveyed the region, he found that four countries—Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Surinam, and Antigua & Barbuda—are only "partly free", and that several of the "free" countries are not stable. Indeed, Payne concluded that "the survival of even the strongest democracies in the Caribbean cannot be taken for granted."[3]

Why is this? In some cases, such as

[2]The phrase is Professor Anthony Maingot's. See his "Emigration and Development in the English-Speaking Caribbean", in *Unauthorized Migration: Addressing the Root Causes*, Research Addendum, Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development, vol. 2, p. 625.

[3]Douglas W. Payne, "Democracy in the Caribbean: A Cause for Concern" (Washington, DC, 1995: Center for Strategic and International Studies), p. 4.

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Antigua & Barbuda, one corrupt family runs the place and may run it into the ground; in others, the legacy of corruption from a previous period—such as the Pindling years in the Bahamas—seems impossible to clean up. Haiti's travails are familiar, and the establishment of stable democratic institutions there seems, at best, decades away. In the Dominican Republic the Balaguer years are finally ending, leaving behind great poverty, no nationally popular leaders, enormous corruption, and a long history of stolen elections. Racial differences and racially-based parties are the problem in Guyana and in Trinidad & Tobago, producing in the latter case a 1991 coup attempt by a radical Islamic group that held the nation's entire parliament hostage for five days.

Faith in democracy, universal at the time of independence in the 1960s, is fraying. Howard Wiarda of the National Defense University expresses a growing consensus:

> A worrisome factor is the apparent weakening of the successor generations' commitment to democracy. It is plain that on the islands, as on the mainland, the early euphoria over a restored or reinvigorated democracy has passed and considerable disillusionment has set in. The new democracies have not delivered much in the way of goods, services, jobs, and prosperity. Some are simply disillusioned with democracy's unfulfilled hopes, but others are blaming democracy for their troubles.[4]

To these political problems must be added an economic challenge many Caribbean countries are not likely to meet. Since the Second World War, the states of the region have benefited from a variety of preferential trade arrangements, whether as colonies or independent states. Today, the European Community's Lomé Agreement and the U.S. Caribbean Basin Initiative offer special access for Caribbean exports. But the preferences are on their way out, for the "level playing field" is the new organizing principle of international trade.

In the 1980s the United States adopted the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) and directed large aid flows not only to Central America but to the Caribbean as well. Today, the Caribbean's brief place in the sun in Washington has fallen into shadows. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) offers Mexico benefits not matched by the CBI, and the obvious result—as the U.S. International Trade Commission predicted—is a diversion of trade and investment from the Caribbean into Mexico.[5] During the first half of 1995, for example, textile exports from Mexico to the United States grew more than twice as fast as Caribbean exports did.[6] Unless and until NAFTA's advantages are matched by an enhanced CBI these trends can only worsen, but efforts to give "NAFTA parity" to the CBI beneficiary countries were all rejected in Congress in 1994 and again in 1995.

Moreover, the U.S. position in the great banana war is to support the cheaper Latin producers, such as Ecuador, against the expensive Caribbean exporters, which have hitherto had protected markets in Europe. Whatever the merits of the case as a matter of trade law and of market economics, losing those European markets would devastate the economies of the Windward Island countries: Bananas constitute more than 50 percent of the exports of Grenada, St. Lucia, Dominica, and 49 percent for St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Meanwhile, aid flows have fallen fast: U.S. aid (excluding special appropriations for Haiti) went from $226 million in 1984 to $24

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[4]Howard J. Wiarda, "U.S. Policy and Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean" (Washington, DC: CSIS, 1995), p. 4.

[5]*Potential Effects of a North American Free Trade Agreement on Apparel Investment in CBERA Countries*, U.S. International Trade Commission Publication 2541 (July 1992), p. 53.

[6]"NAFTA and the Textile Industry", *Mexico and NAFTA Report* (London: Latin American Regional Reports), December 7, 1995, p. 2.

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million in 1994, and aid from the United Kingdom and the European Community is falling as well.

The economic problems of the Caribbean nations are no mystery: They export little, save little, have few resources but sand (except for Trinidad, which has oil), and need far more new jobs than they are creating. Unemployment is perhaps 30 percent in Barbados and Grenada, 25 percent in the Dominican Republic, immeasurably high in Haiti. It is highest in every country among urban youth—a perfect formula for crime and unrest. Over the next fifteen years the Caribbean population, now thirty-six million, will rise another six million, and will hit fifty million in 2025, but far fewer jobs than workers are being added.

To underlying political and economic problems has recently been added the new danger of corruption and violence connected to drug trafficking. St. Kitts in 1994 provided a sad example. In June of that year, the country's ambassador to the United Nations, who had previously been the attorney for several offshore banks suspected of money laundering, disappeared without a trace. In October a huge load of cocaine was discovered on an abandoned beach. One week later the commander of the country's Secret Service was murdered by a gunman using a sophisticated rifle with infrared sights—which was left behind to impress others with the dangers law enforcement officers and their collaborators now ran. A week after that the son of the deputy prime minister was murdered, and his older brothers were arrested when drugs, money, and guns were found in their home. When they were quickly released on minimal bail, other prisoners burned down the jail in protest.

St. Kitts is not alone. As Anthony Maingot, a veteran Caribbean-watcher at Florida International University, recently wrote, "it has become predictable that when cases involving grand larceny, fraud and conspiracy or bribery and the sale of 'citizenship' and passports are reported in the international press, some offshore center—old or new—in the Caribbean will be the safekeeper."[7] And these small states are virtually defenseless, for their military forces are tiny. Jamaica's are comparatively large at three thousand men; Trinidad & Tobago has two thousand; Haiti's police force is new and disorganized; the smaller islands measure their security forces in hundreds, not thousands. These countries have no navies to patrol their coasts, no air forces to protect their skies. It is, in a way, admirable that the Caribbean nations as a whole spent only 1.4 percent of GDP on security in 1994. But it means that they are virtually defenseless when powerful drug and criminal groups approach.

And they have approached. The following conclusions are from the U.S. Department of State's 1995 *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*:

> The Bahamas remains a major transit country for U.S.-bound Colombian cocaine and Jamaican marijuana. . . . The Dominican Republic is a major transshipment country for illegal drugs destined for the United States. . . . Haiti remains a base of operations for Colombian trafficking organizations and an increasingly important transshipment point for the movement of South American cocaine to the United States. . . . Jamaica is both a major producer of marijuana and a flourishing transshipment site for South America cocaine en route to the United States. . . . In 1994 the Eastern Caribbean region experienced increased use as a transit corridor for marijuana and cocaine into the U.S. and drug trafficking emerged as a threat to the political stability of the region.

The Question of Viability

WHAT DOES THIS all add up to? Robert Pastor, President Carter's top aide on Latin America and the Caribbean, and Richard Fletcher of the

[7]Anthony P. Maingot, "Dirty Money", *Freedom Review* (July/August 1995), p. 8.

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Inter-American Development Bank have a gloomy forecast: "The Caribbean is not in danger of revolution; rather the prospect is for continued deterioration, growing social delinquency (crime, drugs), emigration and sporadic attempted coups by radicals or drug-traffickers or both."[8] Pastor and Fletcher have even written the V-word—"the question of economic viability remains unanswered"—although limiting their doubts to Caribbean economies. Others are less restrained: Howard Wiarda maintains that "at some point, the United States will have to deal in a policy sense with these tougher questions: not just the problem of still-shaky democracies, but also the relationship in these states between economic and political issues and ultimately the problem of viability itself."[9]

"Viability itself"? Precisely. It is time to ask, out loud, whether the decision made by Puerto Ricans decades ago when they voted for commonwealth status, and by Bermudans in a 1995 plebiscite that rejected independence from Britain, was not the wiser course: continuing dependency on a larger, richer, stronger nation. Of course, for nations as large as Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica, Haiti or the Dominican Republic, the question is silly; it is less so for the smallest islands, with populations as low as 95,000 (Grenada), 72,000 (Dominica), 64,000 (Antigua & Barbuda), and even 41,000 (St. Kitts & Nevis). There are dependencies, colonies, "associated states" in the Caribbean with larger populations than several of these independent nations: not only Puerto Rico, but Aruba and Curacao (which have ties to the Netherlands), Bermuda, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guadeloupe, Martinique, and French Guiana. Indeed, there are towns with larger populations. Watching the Europeans pour money into "their" territories after this year's terrible hurricane season, Caribbean residents may be forgiven for wondering what the costs and what the benefits of total independence really are.

Full colonial status may be a non-starter, but a voluntary, beneficial erosion of sovereignty should not be. For example, under agreements signed in 1995, six of the smallest states in the Eastern Caribbean now permit U.S. Navy vessels full freedom of action in their territorial waters, calculating no doubt that it is better to have their sovereignty invaded by Americans under treaty than by drug runners at will. These are versions of "shiprider agreements" with the United States, under which a local official is put on board a U.S. Navy or Coast Guard vessel, allowing better communication and coordination, and, most important of all, providing immediate permission for U.S. moves in territorial waters that would otherwise be off-limits. Indeed, under the 1995 agreements, the Americans can act even if a "shiprider" is absent or unavailable and a "suspect vessel or aircraft" moves into territorial waters.

In truth, the small states of the Caribbean are nearly defenseless if their territory, sovereignty, and democratic institutions are attacked by criminals and drug traffickers. Their often fragile democratic institutions cannot survive without help from outside powers, which means—as it did in the cases of Grenada and Haiti—the United States. American domination of the region is greater now than ever before, because in the past it was always contested—by the Spanish or British until the beginning of this century, by the Soviets and Cubans more recently. Today, the only major power that cares deeply about the Caribbean is the one that has a border there.

American intervention is almost inevitable if instability breaks out. Would the United States not act if a Caribbean government were overthrown by radicals, as almost happened in Trinidad? Or if a migration crisis threatened to arise due to events in Cuba or Haiti, as happened in the recent past? Or

[8]Robert Pastor and Richard Fletcher, "The Caribbean in the 21st Century", *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1991), p. 100-1.

[9]Wiarda, p. 4.

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if a drug cartel seemed to be in control of an island's government and security forces? Even the strictest interpretation of the Weinberger or Powell Doctrine should not be an obstacle: the Pentagon should be enthusiastic about interventions that, given their scale, are bound to be quick and successful. Must the United States act alone? Collective action, whether through the United Nations or the Organization of American States, is impossible if the United States vetoes it, and unnecessary if the United States is willing to act. It may be a useful legitimization of American intervention, as it was in Haiti, but the decision-makers remain exclusively within the U.S. government. The dominant power in the region cannot evade its role as the ultimate guarantor of peace, stability, and, nowadays, democracy.

With this in mind, the small states of the Caribbean may well be best off accepting and trying to regularize American intervention—as several have now done with regard to the U.S. Coast Guard and Navy—in exchange for certain economic and trade benefits. As it is clear that the small states must rely on outside powers to assist them if their democratic institutions are under assault, why not establish some regime that sets the rules? These would set forth how aid might be requested from the United States or some multilateral body, establish in advance what sanctions would be applied to the usurpers, legitimate the intervention—and deter coup plotters by making it clear that they will indeed be pressured or pushed out of power.[10]

Might the United States "buy" assistance in its drug wars, by giving the Caribbean states more aid and NAFTA parity in exchange for a larger role in regional defense? Could a new defense treaty between the United States and groups of countries—the Eastern Caribbean states, or the English-speaking (Commonwealth) countries—provide them not only with arms and training, but as well with economic benefits, conceived of as a form of rent? Could American control of national security affairs not co-exist with local control over all other matters, at least for the smallest islands? It should even be possible to think of new political associations, new forms of commonwealth status under which some of the Caribbean nations voluntarily link themselves with the United States.

Many in the Caribbean will see such ideas as efforts to reverse history and restore colonialism. And a new and more intimate relationship with the United States should not be imposed; if useful, it can be developed step-by-step as a response to events, rather as were the shiprider agreements. Faced with security problems, a grim economic future, and uncertain political stability, it is not hard to believe that some island leaders will see closer ties with the United States as a brighter prospect. Too big a push from Washington might undercut them by making them seem to be American puppets, but at least the message from up north should be that we, too, are reassessing our relationships.

Given the historic American opposition to colonialism and the present mood of isolationism in many quarters, these suggestions may be more unpopular here than in parts of the Caribbean. But the reality is that the Caribbean micro-states have a most uncertain future, and may prove to be politically and economically unviable. Given their location, it is a strong American interest to maintain stability and the rule of law in those countries, and mechanisms to accomplish this goal must either be carefully planned and negotiated—or decided hastily at the Pentagon when crises eventuate. Geography forces them to associate with the United

[10]Some of these ideas were suggested by Professor Richard J. Bloomfield in his remarks on Caribbean security at the conference on "International Security in the Greater Caribbean", held at the Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, October 20, 1995.

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States, and whether that association takes the form of sporadic intervention or permanent cooperation is the only issue remaining open.

This would be a sensible time to address it. The parameters of an economic relationship are clear: the nations of the Caribbean should be given trade benefits no less advantageous than those accorded Mexico under NAFTA. For the very smallest economies, foreign aid will be necessary—permanently. The political and military side is less clear, for many kinds of cooperation and association are possible. But the anti-colonial mindset, and the insistence on full independence, that marked the 1960s should be relegated to the past. Developments in the world economy, and indeed in international criminal activity, have made full independence tantamount to full vulnerability for the smallest states. Far more valuable would be a relationship with the United States that helped guarantee prosperity, security, and liberty. □

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Correction:

In Grace Goodell's article "Another Way to Skin a Cat" in our Winter issue, an egregious error demoted Singapore from the status of an independent country (p. 67). Apologies to Singapore and to Professor Goodell.

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Trop de Zèle

Hasan Ünal

David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1996), 394 pp., $25.00.

LORD OWEN IS one of those many unfortunates who, in the period of terminal decline of the British Empire, was sent off to sup with devils, equipped only with an undersized spoon. His job was, as representative negotiator for "Europe", to bring peace to Bosnia. He started his performance just as news of the Serbs' death camps was breaking in 1992. The atrocities continued as Lord Owen whizzed back and forth, and he has had, on the whole, a bad press for so doing. He put his name to a plan which, in the true style of *bas-empire* Britain, appeased the powerful—in this case, the Serbs, who were to be given a lot of land in Vance-Owen's division of Bosnia-Herzegovina into a bewildering variety of ethnic "cantons." The plan collapsed in the spring of 1993 when, despite this generosity, the Bosnian Serbs refused the deal. Lord Owen, who had called the plan "spring-time in the Balkans", might, with dignity, have then resigned. Instead he persisted well into 1995.

In the early summer of 1995 I, along with a delegation from the Turkish Parliament, visited him. Public opinion in Turkey, which has a large Balkan-descended population, was highly indignant at the continuing massacres of Muslims in Bosnia, the connivance of British officers in them, and the insults which, by implication, British policy seemed to be directing toward secular Muslims in general. The deputies wished to find out for themselves what on earth had motivated this policy, coming as it did from a country that Turks regard as an ally. We talked to Lord Owen for two and a half hours; he endeavored to defend himself, but unfortunately the feeling afterwards among the delegation was that not a word he uttered could be believed.

Lord Owen has, of course, collected many critics, Margaret Thatcher not least among them. In order to defend his conduct over his three years as European Union negotiator he has now published his memoirs of the experience. The book, *Balkan Odyssey*, came out in November—just a few weeks after the United States had decided to clip the Serbs' wings by embarking on a relatively sustained and intensive air campaign against selected Bosnian Serb targets. Though they were not directed at the Serb tanks and artillery that had been pounding Bosnian towns with impunity, or at the Serb (former JNA—Yugoslav National Army) soldiers who were unquestionably responsible for much of the carnage, these air strikes, coming on the heels of a successful Croatian campaign in western Bosnia, were enough to force the Serbs to accept a peace deal that they had rejected in the past. David Owen criticizes "lap-top bombardiers" who had argued for this policy since the late summer of 1992, when the Serb's death camps became manifest to some degree at least. But it was these derided figures who had come up with the policy that finally stopped the slaughter.

It seems to be one of Lord Owen's characteristics that he combines remarkable intuition with remarkable lack of spine. For he himself had argued for airstrikes, early on. Perhaps that was why he was made EU negotiator: Throw responsibility at him, and he will learn sense. In writing, for instance, to Prime Minister John Major in late June 1992,

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Owen urged him "not to accept the conventional wisdom that nothing can be done militarily to stop the escalation of fighting and the continuation of . . . grotesque abuses of human rights." His suggestion at this time that NATO, with its "sophisticated proven and trusted command and control", be brought in to beef up the United Nations and stop the Serbian war machinery was the right one. It certainly worked in 1995.

Whether or not it was in fact the responsibility of representing "Europe" that changed his mind, he was soon on record arguing that airstrikes would not be right after all. (The efficacy of airstrikes now having been proved, he claims that he had always advocated them. But those of us who have followed the conflict closely know that this is not so.) Certainly, the initial use of airpower seemed to bear out his objections, but what an utter farce it was. There would be pinprick strikes against a Serb tank or two, which had been transgressing the truly lavish standards of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). The Serbs would be informed well in advance that their tank would be well and truly exploded. On one occasion, the tickings-off were offered so very far in advance, and the attacking aircraft was required to circle the offending tanks for so long, that even the Serbs' primitive antiaircraft weaponry managed to bring down a British Harrier.

And then there was the amazing legend—truly amazing in that it was propagated by what is supposed to be one of the premier Intelligence outfits in the Western Alliance—of the invincibility of the Serbs. In order to cozy up to these allegedly invincible mountain chieftains, UNPROFOR even helped them with intelligence. All this was done so as to confute arguments against the invincibility theory. The length to which it was taken is indicated by recent revelations that the British UN commander, Michael Rose, ordered British SAS (Special Air Service Regiment) scouts stationed deep inside Serb-held territory that they were not on any account to identify Serb artillery positions for NATO pilots to bomb—even when the international mandates for this were unambiguous, and when a ferocious Serbian advance on the so-called safe area of Bihac was in full swing late in 1994.[1]

On the whole, Lord Owen's memoirs are neither superficial nor, in a factual sense, misleading. On the contrary, they reveal a solid record of tortuous negotiations (and are complemented by a CD-ROM of source materials). Political scientists, used to swimming in a glue of prose, will not find their muscles particularly stretched by the style, which makes things clear, and historians are apt to find much that helps to illuminate the mind of the appeaser. Rather too much of the information is of the bureaucratically mundane—meetings here, meetings there, cameras whirring, tea-cups clattering, interpreters muttering. Owen's records trek through hundreds, if not thousands, of official and semi-official meetings, encounters, and talks with all and sundry, from the parties to the conflict to the officials of faraway countries that expressed some interest in Bosnia. The curious mechanisms of "Europe" even required much politesse to stray Belgians or Portuguese, those without the slightest real interest in, or leverage on, the problem. Politeness is not one of David Owen's best-documented qualities, but he manages to display it toward some strange customers—to the Greeks' weird insistence on changing Macedonia's name and flag, and to Dobrica Cosic, whose memorandum for the Serbian Academy of Sciences in 1986 may be described as the starting point for the entire vicious program of ethnic cleansing upon which Milosevic and his men were launched. All in all, the facts in this book—and in the CD-ROM—are useful enough. But Owen's is a very partial view, and is tinged throughout with Islamophobia.

The expertise he acquired overnight of Bosnia is reminiscent of that acquired by Thorvald Stoltenberg, who, having studied the

[1]See Ed Vulliamy, "Bosnia: The Secret War. How the CIA Intercepted SAS Signals", *The Guardian*, January 29, 1996.

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history of Bosnia—meticulously by his standards—concluded that all the people in Bosnia were originally Serbs, and that in fact "the whole lot of them are Serbs."[2] Throughout the book Owen repeats the oft-reiterated arguments to prove that there was no genocidal war in Bosnia, that it was a simple civil war, and that there were no goodies and baddies in it. According to him, all the parties were capable of killing in cold blood, and all of them were "masters of disinformation, propaganda and deceit." And he refers to the ubiquitous myths about wild people in the Balkans killing each other for ages, and advances the equally false view that hundreds of years of ethnic hatred explain the Bosnia war. In insisting that it was a civil war, he outdoes even Douglas Hurd, the former British Foreign Secretary, who had to admit that Belgrade was involved in Bosnia in the initial stages.[3] What Owen, and all others who ascribe the bloodshed in Bosnia to the break-up of Yugoslavia and "the ancient hatreds" supposedly endemic in the Balkans, refuse to understand is that the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina broke out because Belgrade wanted it to break out. Had the ethnic composition of Bosnia been the real reason for its outbreak, Macedonia would have shared the same fate by now. But, as Belgrade did not and could not provoke a war in Macedonia, peace there has been maintained.

Every country in the Balkans is colorful and multicultural: all host a number of minorities despite their claims to homogeneity. And no civil war in these countries has taken place between one or a group of minorities and the majority. Since the establishment of nation-states in the region, every civil war that has been fought was fought between such groups as royalists and republicans or communists and non-communists, between, that is, certain sections of the ruling majority, never between a minority and a majority. Even in the case where significant minorities live right on the border with their "mother states"—such as the Turks in Bulgaria or the Hungarians in Romania—there is no reason to believe that civil wars are likely to break out between them and their "host nations." That could only occur if those mother states give a green light and become involved—which would then turn the conflict into an inter-state war much like the Bosnian war.

By the same token, since Belgrade did not order "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo, peace, however fragile, has been preserved there. What has deterred Milosevic from embarking upon new adventures in Kosovo and Macedonia has not been Lord Owen's overzealous diplomatic activity but the clear-cut warning sent to Belgrade in the form of strongly-worded letters by the United States government that any such Serb action in the southeastern Balkans would trigger large-scale bombing of Serbia itself. The American military presence on the Macedonian border, though small, underwrote that warning and this was rightly understood by Belgrade. In the absence of this sort of a threat, Lord Owen might well have had to negotiate over yet another genocide.

Lord Owen repeats the canard that the Bosnians shelled their own people in order to arouse public indignation in the West and to provoke intervention to save them from the Serbs. This assertion is baseless. No one, including Owen himself, has ever been able to identify any Bosnian provocateurs, and never have the enraged relatives of the victims attacked an alleged provocateur or accused the Bosnian government of being implicated in such crimes. As Mr. Izetbegovic told journalists in London in August 1992, there was and would be no need for the Bosnian government to do anything undercover to enrage the international public, because that work was being done for them more than adeptly by the Serbs, with their daily boasting about their bestial behavior before television cameras. And the Bosnians were not so foolish as to expect

[2]See Noel Malcolm, "The Whole Lot of Them are Serbs", *The Spectator*, June 10, 1995, pp. 14-8.

[3]Douglas Hurd, "The Long Hard Slog to a Bosnian Peace", *The Tablet*, April 1, 1995, pp. 412-4.

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anything concrete out of such crimes, given that people like Lord Owen were determined to forestall any extensive NATO bombing of Serb targets, whatever the provocation. As Lord Owen himself insisted in Belgrade in February 1994, after the terrible marketplace massacre in Sarajevo: "Nobody but a fool wants airstrikes." And his spokesman John Mills had told the press as early as July 1993: "The message to Muslims is to negotiate or perish." Interestingly, none of these quotations appears in the book.

Perhaps the mass graves unearthed daily, and the recent steady flow of information indicating that in various parts of Bosnia the Serb forces and paramilitaries committed war crimes on a large scale, will help Lord Owen to understand that many of the rumors as to the Bosnians' self-inflicted massacres were made up by UNPROFOR personnel, weary and ashamed of their own impotence. Transferring the blame to the Muslims obviated having to take stronger action against the Serbs, action that the international public would have clamored for had UN personnel honestly identified the guilty party. Hence UNPROFOR efforts to either misinform the public or to keep essential information secret, until and unless the Western media got wind of it.

Though Lord Owen's book is fundamentally flawed and unconvincing, he does make two valid points. The first is that he was subjected to a barrage of undeserved invective by enraged politicians and diplomats. A number of Western-oriented Muslim states directed their artillery tacitly or openly at international mediators such as Owen, the United Nations and its secretary general. For instance, playing to the gallery and taking the easy option, the Turkish government continually criticized Owen and Boutros Boutros-Ghali for failing to respond decisively to Serbian aggression. Otherwise, Ankara and other capitals would have had to turn their guns at the real culprits: the Security Council, and those European governments—above all the British government—that sent Lord Owen to negotiate *any alternative* to military intervention. The upshot of laboring under these circumstances was bound to be a distorted diagnosis of the conflict, an unjust peace, and the virtual destruction of a European state. Lord Owen grasped his duties quite well and acted accordingly. But it should be remembered that he did not write his own brief.

The second point refers to his criticism of the U.S. administration for undermining his studiously prepared peace in early 1993. Here Owen is on rock solid ground because, after all, on paper the Vance-Owen plan was less rewarding to Serbian ethnic cleansing and conquests than the Dayton deal. The U.S. administration, which had condemned the Lord's plan as repulsive to the principles it was trying to uphold, waited for more than two years simply to come back with a deal based on the same flawed premises. "What's the difference between the Vance-Owen plan and the Dayton agreement?", asked Misha Glenny, and he gave the answer: "Nothing except two years of mass graves."[4]

All this should haunt the Americans, but whether it does or not remains to be seen (the Nobel Prize Committee may bless those two years as the mark of statesmanship). In any case, there is one other difference between Vance-Owen circa 1993 and the Dayton peace of late 1995, and it is an important one. This time the Americans are heavily involved and clearly have become impatient with European "sophistication." The one British figure who might have carried conviction in the whole grisly story was, of course, Margaret Thatcher, whose instincts were, from the start, quite right. But it is one of the curious facts of modern English politics that when you need a man you get a woman. □

[4]See Misha Glenny's review of Owen's book, "The 51 Percent Solution" in the *New York Times Book Review*, January 21, 1996.

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The Man Who Liked Reporters

Paul Gigot

Marlin Fitzwater, *Call the Briefing! Reagan and Bush, Sam and Helen—A Decade with Presidents and the Press* (New York: Times Books, 1995), 399 pp., $25.00.

IF I HAD TO CHOOSE the most perilous job in Washington, White House press secretary would be it. You have to serve two masters, the president and the press, who measure your performance by converse standards. A president wants you to reveal only the best news about him, if that, while the press corps wants you to be able to confirm, at a moment's notice, the worst. Self-immolation lurks behind your every utterance.

So it's saying something that Marlin Fitzwater was the most effective and well-liked press secretary since Pierre Salinger served John Kennedy. Fitzwater spent six years as spokesman for two presidents of markedly different public styles, Ronald Reagan and George Bush, and lived to tell about them. This memoir helps explain his remarkable survival. The book resembles his own tenure as press secretary: It reveals enough for the reader to think he's getting something for his time, but not so much that Fitzwater is disloyal to his bosses.

Both of his bosses—presidents and press. Everyone seems to be blaming the media for something these days, but Fitzwater actually likes reporters, or at least most of them. Hence, this is not a book full of the fashionable, Naderite critique of reporters as celebrities. There is no lament about falling press standards or "sound bites" or talk shows as ego trips. Fitzwater has a simple, traditional way of judging the press: He likes reporters who are straight with him, and who get it right. He has nice things to say about many reporters, even Sam Donaldson, whom he credits with being a hard-working pain.

For those who failed to meet those standards, Fitzwater can settle scores like a loan shark. He all but breaks the kneecaps of Andy Rosenthal, the reporter (and son of famous *Times*man and columnist A.M. Rosenthal) who broke the non-story, in 1992, about George Bush's astonishment upon seeing a supermarket checkout scanner. That story became, during the 1992 presidential campaign, a metaphor for Bush's detachment from the lives of average Americans. But, as Fitzwater reports, Rosenthal never even saw the event himself. Bush had expressed his usual gee-whiz politeness at some genuinely new technology. Rosenthal took the account of the event from the media "pool" and spun it into an exaggeration that made page one. "It was one of those stories where the truth never catches up with the lie", Fitzwater writes. The *Times* defended the story, and most of the media repeated it, with a laudable exception or two.

Fitzwater attributes the episode to Rosenthal's personal demons, but in doing this he misses a broader truth about modern media demons: Once a stereotype is formed about a public official, it is almost impossible to shake. In his 1922 book, *Public Opinion*, Walter Lippmann wrote about how the public mind is shaped by stereotypes. All the more so seventy-five years later in our age of instant, relentless information. Any episode, any anecdote, that fits into a prevailing media view will be magnified or ignored with that in mind. So if Dan Quayle misspells potato-e, it's news because it feeds the stereotype of

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Quayle as a lightweight. If Al Gore makes the same mistake, no one cares. The Bush checkout counter anecdote had legs because it fed a media consensus that he was out-of-touch.

Fitzwater also shows that many media big shots can't take a punch, at least not with any grace. One of Fitzwater's targets is Mike Wallace, the CBS and "60 Minutes" star, whom he accuses of lying about an interview request and of general anti-conservative bias. The Fitzwater account is unflattering but less nasty than the average "60 Minutes" skewering. Yet when Fitzwater was promoting his book in New York, Wallace tracked him down on the set of a TV show, haranguing him first by phone and then in person with a string of obscenities. Wallace demanded an apology until Fitzwater fled into the street without even doing the show—which, appropriately enough, was Comedy Central's "Politically Incorrect."

The former Kansas farm boy is mostly sparing of the two presidents he served, even on matters of relatively minor embarrassment. He includes a long, and exulting, section on Mikhail Gorbachev's state visit to Washington in 1987. That summit sold itself as a public relations matter, but Fitzwater overlooks the real PR drama of that week: the personal Cold War between Nancy Reagan and Raisa Gorbachev. Since Fitzwater does report getting a cold-blooded call from Mrs. Reagan when she was ousting Donald Regan as chief of staff, perhaps he wants to stay on her good side even now.

The author is less generous to many of his administration colleagues, whose foibles he reveals. George Shultz, Reagan's second secretary of state, had a habit of "snorting like Ferdinand the Bull" and threatening his resignation at regular intervals. Secretary of Defense Cap Weinberger was so intent on protecting his own caboose during Iran-Contra that he browbeat Reagan into reversing himself on a small factual point. (Fitzwater thinks aides are supposed to take such hits for the boss.) And all-around Machiavell Dick Darman was a bully who liked to scream at his lessers.

Especially arresting is Fitzwater's account of how the two presidents fired three different chiefs of staff—Donald Regan, John Sununu, and Sam Skinner. News reports have focused on how all three men cried when they finally got the word. But the accounts provided here are much more interesting as a commentary on the fleeting nature of power in Washington. Presidents who must shed a friend as a political liability are as ruthless in the end, as they have to be. (It was the high-minded Gladstone, after all, who said that the first requisite for a prime minister was that he be "a good butcher.") But even if the entire world knows the axe is coming, the men whose necks are exposed are invariably surprised when it falls. Of course, the *schadenfreude* in the press corps at these beheadings is palpable. Anyone who is ever offered a top administration job should read these pages from Fitzwater before accepting.

The biggest disappointment in the book is that it includes nothing on the Panama incursion and Gulf War, which together consumed nearly half the Bush presidency. Fitzwater's excuse is that others will write about them. But this allows Fitzwater to avoid discussing the difficult matter of how freely a free press should be able to cover a war, or how and how often television pictures influence foreign-policy decisions. Fitzwater might have discussed how those pictures played in the premature ending of the Gulf War, our entry to Somalia, and the decision to stay out of Bosnia in the Bush years. Unlike some press secretaries, Fitzwater had the access to know what happened. Instead we get a breathless account of two summit meetings and some give-and-take with Gorbachev, who Fitzwater once called a "drugstore cowboy", to much silly Beltway consternation.

The haphazard influence of modern communications on policy is apparent in Fitzwater's account of the aborted coup

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against Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega in October 1989. Fitzwater records National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, on the phone to the Pentagon, showing that he knows less about the coup than the local CNN correspondent. "How about the bridge?" Scowcroft asks. "CNN says the bridge is open." There then follows a hilarious, if disconcerting, exchange during which John Sununu recommends using U.S. troops to block a causeway, based not on what the Pentagon knows but on what CNN is reporting. Cooler heads than Sununu's—which means just about any head—prevailed.

It was another press leak—this one to the *Wall Street Journal*—that probably forced Bush's eventual decision to topple Noriega. The CIA station chief in Panama vented to the *Journal* that the United States had had contact with coup leaders, implying some American help, but had backed away at crunch time. Fitzwater had told the press the United States wasn't involved, because Scowcroft had told him it wasn't, apparently because he didn't know either. Fitzwater says the news was in the CIA's written daily briefing for Bush, but in "such an elliptical way" that no one at a senior level had noticed. But this would seem to understate the ineptitude or duplicity. Either Fitzwater's superiors lied to him about their knowledge, or else the CIA was free-lancing a little too freely. This is remarkable considering that Bush was both a former director of Central Intelligence and a president preoccupied with foreign matters. In any event, Fitzwater admits that he took the rap for lying to the press rather than reveal the president's ignorance of events. The press "had us on incompetence and lying, a deadly combination for a politician", Fitzwater admits. Bush later used an incident involving a U.S. soldier as a pretext for invading Panama, but making amends for the failed coup was a powerful motive.

The Panama episode shows that only a foolish administration thinks it can fool the public for long. The American government is so porous that the truth almost always emerges, especially when there is internal division or controversy. The Bush team was more disciplined than most but even it couldn't prevent leaks. Fitzwater records Bush's pique when David Hoffman of the *Washington Post* reported the story of his scheduling a first summit with Gorbachev a day before the official announcement, breaking a promise Bush had made to the Soviet leader. But the leak almost certainly came from James Baker's team at State, which was tight with Hoffman going back to the Reagan days. Bush should have screamed at Baker, not Hoffman.

A smart administration also brings its main press aide into the room where decisions are made. This makes it much easier to avoid getting caught in the kind of lies that damage credibility or promote a reputation for flip-flopping, à la Panama. This doesn't mean a press secretary has to make everything public. In fact, one of Fitzwater's personal rules for dealing with the press is that, yes, "You can run and hide." Sometimes you just have to tell reporters you can't talk to them about a subject. This is an easier sell if you've built up credibility with reporters along the way.

Try as he might, Fitzwater never could persuade George Bush to like the press. More than any recent president, Bush courted reporters with invitations, late movies, private lunches. For Bush, all politics was personal, even press politics. So he felt stung when the same reporter he had feted the night before would tatoo him the next day. Fitzwater says he gave different advice. "'Treat them like professionals', I advised him, 'and they will be your friends. But treat them like friends and they will betray you every time.'" Fitzwater knows the first laws of press relations and foreign policy are the same: Know thy enemy. □

Paul A. Gigot writes the Potomac Watch column on Fridays in the Wall Street Journal.

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Herb Greer, Steven Katz, John Kleeberg, Charles Lichenstein, Daniel Pipes, and Michael Roskin

Islam: Appeasement or Discrimination?

AS ONE OF THE first Western journalists to report the "first" Algerian war from the Muslim side, I spent two winters with the FLN and the ALN in the field. . . .While living among the Algerians I had direct experience of the profound anti-Western hatred of fundamentalist Muslims. Thus it came as something of a surprise to see—in *The National Interest* of all places—the long-discredited argument for a complaisant view of Islamic fundamentalism ("Déjà Vu All Over Again—Algeria, France, and Us", Winter 1995/6). The logic of it dates back well into the last century: an implicit assumption that with dialogue there is bound to be some sort of rapprochement between hidebound Islam and the more or less Christian West. This will be brought about by a necessary resort to Western technology and/or institutions such as "democracy" (i.e. elections), both of which must lead to a gradual "maturing" of the Islamic world into Western ways and standards or something enough like them to be tolerable.

Those who make that argument disregard the structures and nature of Islamic politics, and deliberately overlook basic tenets of Islam. For these people there is the *Dar-al-Islam* inhabited by the faithful and their subjects, and the *Dar-al-harb*, or house of war inhabited by the rest of us, who must be annexed into the *Dar-al-Islam* either by force or persuasion. Liberals like Matthew Connelly say essentially that we and our governments should pretend that this doctrine is not taken seriously by Muslims.

The impact of Western civilization on Islamic rulers and their people has taken two primary forms. One, technological, has been for the last century and more to increase the efficiency and brutality of the repressive politics in the Islamic world. This has tended to envenom the second effect: a rabid resentment and envy—especially deep-rooted at popular level—of the West and its institutions and its military and economic successes. Contact and dialogue between the two worlds has if anything *further inflamed* both effects. Internecine conflicts in the Islamic society of the Maghreb and the Middle East have altered none of this.

At very best the Islamic attitude toward the West is a reluctant and rather thin tolerance, with the underlying goals (see above) quite unchanged. Because such an approach to international relations has been discredited in the West by Hitler, Stalin, and others, liberal scholars like Matthew Connelly. . . indulge themselves in the illusion that a "reasonable" approach to the fundamentalists will bring tactical tolerance, as it were, to a point of no return. This is dangerous, as the efforts of dominant powers in the Islamic world to acquire weapons of mass destruction show only too clearly. . . .

Pardon my candor, but the silliest part of Mr. Connelly's argument is the suggestion that a hysterical anti-Nazism/communism is merely being retreaded in warnings against fundamentalist Islam. The fact that fundamentalist Islam is not the same thing as Nazism or communism in no way lessens its threat to the West. If the serious menace of Nazism/communism (which was Western and "internal") belongs to the last generation, that is not so with fundamentalist Islam which lies outside Western civilization and does not

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intend to become part of it. On the contrary it wishes to dominate and/or absorb the culture and civilization of the West, employing Western technology to do so. We would be extremely foolish to proceed as though this wish were not to be taken seriously.

Herb Greer
Manchester, UK

MATTHEW CONNELLY sums up his argument with me over U.S. policy toward Algeria in a single sentence: "Nothing is more likely", he writes, "to make the Islamic revival a united and genuinely dangerous threat than treating it as such." In other words, he holds that the ultimate responsibility for fundamentalist Islam lies not with the fundamentalists but with us in the West.

If that sounds familiar, it should, for it's the old blame-America-for-its-enemies line popularized by the radical left in the 1960s. Just replace "the Islamic revival" with "the Soviet bloc", and the parallel becomes obvious. We turned Ho Chi Minh, Vietnamese nationalist, into an ally of Moscow. Belligerent American policies undermined the doves in the Kremlin, spurred the "arms race", and so forth.

These leftist arguments presume two points: that our enemies are at odds with each other until we counterproductively force them to work together; and that, on their own, they are benign, but that Washington's aggression makes them malign.

The blame-America argument, then and now, fails to understand that extremist ideologues (fascists, communists, fundamentalist Muslims) the world over hate the United States as such, whether Washington's policies are soft or hard. And those extremists are right to do so, for by its very existence, this country threatens their visions. It's not just what we do but who we are; not just our objectionable policies but our way of life. As a dynamic, open, affluent society the United States gets in the way of their plans to create a world of stasis, closure, and poverty.

Mr. Connelly also implies that American toughness prompts our enemies to strike at us—and that's flat wrong. To cite just one notable counterexample: Khomeini held American hostages at the U.S. embassy in Tehran for 444 days of Jimmy Carter's presidency, then let them go at the very hour of Ronald Reagan's inauguration. A resolute defense of one's interests, history shows, works much better in the long term than the appeasement Mr. Connelly advocates.

The National Interest never once presented this blame-America argument when it came to the Soviet Union; why do so now in the Algerian case?

Daniel Pipes
Middle East Quarterly

Connelly replies:

Lest anyone else finds all this to be "implicit" in my article I, at least, was not aware that it was written from either a liberal or leftist perspective, however capacious these pigeon-holes have proven to be. To the extent that such terms are still meaningful they apply equally well—or badly—to those who support anti-Islamist dictatorships for the sake of freedom of expression and gender equality. Indeed, Mr. Greer and Dr. Pipes may find that civil libertarians and feminists are their natural allies.

Mr. Greer was perhaps equally unaware that he too was adding to an old tradition. Conservatives, liberals, and leftists alike have long claimed to speak with authority for "these people" after spending some time with some portion of them. Through their eyes Islam appears to rule over a squalid, pitiable place whose benighted inhabitants have nothing better to do than hate and envy us. "Contact and dialogue between the two worlds" is thus made to appear as difficult

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and dangerous as any other inter-planetary travel. Where liberals and conservatives differ is in assessing whether Muslims might be made "tolerable" or whether they really are incorrigible.

Surely a third position is possible, one that recognizes that Islamic civilization is not simply a rejection of the West and that it may even have something to offer. As for the tiny minority of Muslims who do indeed wish us harm, what is needed is a nuanced and knowledgeable analysis, one that would distinguish between their intentions and capabilities and prescribe a policy that showed intelligence as well as "toughness." From Algeria to Afghanistan, Dr. Pipes has failed to meet these minimum requirements, and his continual resort to dubious analogies from another age hardly obscures that fact. We have not yet reached the point where the fanatics on either side have forced us to choose between confrontation or appeasement, between absorbing Islam or being absorbed by it. A more professional approach to U.S. policy can help ensure that we never do.

Terrorism and Bureaucratic Turf:

LAURIE MYLROIE'S reconstruction of the probable provenance of the World Trade Center bombing in your Winter issue is, as CIA's former chief of counterterrorism attests, a "brilliant" job of research and imaginative scholarship—and it was a brilliant (and gutsy) decision on your part to publish it. Saddam Hussein's bloody handprints are smeared all over the rubble. What really died there (one hopes) was American complacency that terrorism cannot be brought home to us.

But there are problems of omission. The author's explanation of why it is that law enforcement—catching, trying, and convicting the perpetrators—is walled off from national security concerns—who really 'dunit, and how, and why—is wanting. Indeed, the answers she offers for our inspection are not explanations at all, but, rather, the most obvious of rationalizations; curiously, she stops short of saying so.

"Protecting bureaucratic turf"? Sure—but only if those who own and operate *all* of the turf, the FBI's *and* the CIA's, protect the protectors. Ms. Mylroie's second explanation, offered without editorial comment, is even curiouser:

> [T]he U.S. government cannot properly address both the national security question of state sponsorship and the criminal question of the guilt or innocence of individual perpetrators at the same time.

It "cannot"? Why? I thought, perhaps naively, that our government had long since mastered the art of chewing gum and simultaneously walking in a straight line.

Saddam Hussein, alas, cannot be brought to American justice along with the hapless bombers themselves. But it must also be noted that the same stringent standards of proof do not apply: the evidence that almost surely would "convict" Saddam of conspiracy to abet terrorism would probably not be produceable in a U.S. court—and, on national security grounds ("protection of sources and methods"), probably ought not to be. But that does not, nor should not, get Saddam off the hook. It simply shifts the judgment of his guilt *and the assessment of his appropriate punishment* to other ground: namely, to the implementation of national security policy at the highest levels of our government.

Therein, in all likelihood, lies the answer to the question "why?"—*why* the indulgence of turf battles, *why* the acquiescence in fake walls of separation between law enforcement and national security, *why* the incessant foot-dragging in identifying the roots of terrorism. To push beyond the conviction of the hands-on perpetrators (when they happen to be available for prosecution) to those fundamentally responsible for terrorism (a.k.a. Saddam Hussein, or Muammar

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Qaddafi, or Hafez al-Asad, or Kim Jong Il) inevitably raises the question, *and what do we intend to do about it*? This is not an easy one to answer: not for the Israeli authorities who rooted out and eliminated "the Engineer" a few months ago or who earlier isolated the terrorist kingpin in the security of his Tunis bedroom and murdered him there, or for that matter for Ronald Reagan when he ordered the airstrike against Qaddafi in his encampment outside Tripoli. Little wonder that our authorities invoke every stratagem to evade the question; but they cannot avoid it forever.

All thanks to Laurie Mylroie for helping us reach the right question. For answers we'll probably have to await the arrival of experienced, resolute adults at those "highest levels" of U.S. political leadership.

Charles M. Lichenstein
The Heritage Foundation

Mylroie replies:

Charles Lichenstein, of course, is right. Two New York area investigators told me that they believe that the question of state sponsorship was not properly addressed because the Clinton administration did not want to do what the American public would have demanded if it were known that Iraq was behind the Trade Center bombing.

Something similar happened in the second bombing conspiracy, where Sudan's involvement never came out. Two Sudanese intelligence agents were to supply the diplomatic plates to get the bomb-laden van into the UN parking garage. The agents were declared personae non grata, while, during the trial, the government referred to them only as "employees" of Sudan's UN mission.

But clearly, dealing with state-sponsored terrorism in this way, as if it were solely a criminal matter, will invite the state sponsors to commit their terror in America and leave a few dupes to be tried.

Phantom Hogs:

I READ Berkowitz and Richelson's article, "The CIA Vindicated—the Soviet Collapse *Was* Predicted" (Fall 1995) with interest, if only to obey the command *audi alteram partem*. Even if we grant that the CIA did warn of a Soviet economic collapse, these warnings certainly did not come through in the most widely available CIA publication, the *Handbook of Economic Statistics*. The *Handbook* for years overestimated the Eastern Bloc economies. I shall concentrate on the East German case because it is the one I know best; because the estimate was so bizarrely high; and because I have more confidence in the democratic credentials of the successor government, and thus in the quality of the statistics produced, than is the case for other former Soviet Bloc nations. The egregiousness of the overestimate in the case of East Germany is indicated by the fact that it was colored a dark green in the 1986 edition of the *Handbook*—which meant that its GNP per capita was higher than most Western European countries, including Britain and France.

Now these overestimates of "soft" statistics such as per capita GNP may be excusable, partly because economists themselves disagree about whether various formulae, such as purchasing power parities, can be applied to command economies. Completely inexcusable is the uncritical copying which the CIA did of official East German "hard" statistics, even though citizens of those countries knew that the official statistics were ridiculous. For example, for 1985 the CIA reported that East Germany had 13.19 million hogs, or 0.79 hogs per capita, West Germany 23.62 million hogs, or 0.39 hogs per capita. In other words, according to the CIA, there were more hogs per capita in East Germany than in West Germany; but that is nonsense to anyone who experienced the meat shortages in East Germany. If this agricultural figure is fake, then we would expect a collapse in hog numbers when West Germany took over and

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more honest statistics began to be reported. This is precisely what has happened. The German Federal Statistical Office says that in 1989 there were 11.79 million reported hogs in East Germany, which is comparable to the CIA figures; by 1991 the reported figure was 5.59 million. . . .

The CIA did change some of its estimates, but it was very quiet about this. In the 1990 *Handbook*, East Germany no longer appeared with a higher GNP per capita than most of Western Europe, but with a lower one, on the level of Ireland and Portugal. In the 1991 *Handbook* the CIA said it was reducing GNP estimates for Eastern Bloc countries because of their shoddy products. This was rather late in the day; East Germany had already disappeared from the map.

There are a number of questions which I think the CIA should answer, if it wants to confront this problem forthrightly:

1) Why did the CIA believe that East Germany's *per capita* GNP was so high?

2) Why did it change its mind in 1990?

3) Why did it take East German industrial and agricultural statistics at face value, and report them as if they were high quality results from Western analysts?

4) Are the statistics which the CIA is now producing about China, North Korea, and Vietnam any more trustworthy? What is it doing differently now?

The answers to these questions will determine whether we are getting our twenty-eight billion dollars worth.

John M. Kleeberg
American Numismatic Society

A Question of Chronology:

WILLIAM PERL'S ESSAY "Paradise Denied" (Winter 1995/6) is a valuable contribution to the anguished, by now well rehearsed, discussion of America's role in and response to the murder of European Jewry during World War II. He is absolutely correct to point out that the U.S. State Department treated the issue callously and immorally, and that such potentially important occasions as the Evian Conference on Refugees held in July 1938 were cynically employed by the State Department to deflect criticism of its impassivity in the face of immense human suffering. What could have been an event that led to saving the lives of hundreds of thousands became a cruel, dishonorable, "public relations" stunt.

This said, Mr. Perl weakens his case by too casually using various other bits of information. First, the reference to killing Jews in *Mein Kampf* is *not* the grounds for attributing genocidal policies to Hitler at this early date. Nor again is the evidence adduced from Nazi party slogans and songs. There was no doubt about Hitler's anti-semitism—and that of the Nazi Party—from the 1920s on, but one must be careful not to read history backwards, that is, from the end to the beginning, and thus see the actuality of Auschwitz in the more general, unspecific coarse anti-semitism of the Nazis before 1939. A more nuanced understanding of the evolution—and it was a real, if twisted development—of Nazi anti-semitic thought and policy is required both in itself and also to fairly evaluate the American (and other) response to the events of the 1930s.

First, Perl's comment that "Nazi intentions became even clearer when, after war began on September 1, 1939, specially formed troops called *Einsatzgruppen* had but one assignment, to follow the German army into Poland and massacre Jews" is not correct. . . . The role of the *Einsatzgruppen* in 1939 was not to "advance. . . into Poland and massacre Jews"— this was the later, singular, order given to the *Einsatzgruppen* as part of the battle plan for the Invasion of Russia in summer 1941. Despite the many murders of Polish Jews, the fate of European Jewry was not yet decided in September 1939. Perl has conflated the Polish experience of 1939 with that of the Russian post-invasion reality of

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1941; the primary consequence of the conquest of Poland was the creation of ghettos and the general policy of ghettoization. The policy of total extermination was yet in the future.

This chronology of events bears directly on Perl's criticism of State Department actions in regard to the 1939-40 initiative of the Virgin Island government to admit Jews. The State Department, and Breckinridge Long in particular, deserve the most serious censure for their heinous actions. But. . . Perl's argument is not strengthened through the citation of a June 1940 memo—clearly indicating the State Department's deceitful and malicious chicanery in the area of Jewish immigration—followed by the judgment that "this was done in full knowledge of Hitler's determination to have all Jews killed." In June 1940, Hitler's determination in this regard, whatever the meaning of his January 30, 1939 Reichstag speech, had not yet been translated into an actual plan involving the killing of all Jews. (The Wannsee Conference of January 20, 1942, and the trail leading up to it begins to unfold in the summer of 1941. Goring's letter to Heydrich authorizing him to seek "a total solution to the Jewish question in the German sphere of influence in Europe" was sent on July 17, 1941.)

In an area of such emotional and historic significance as that represented by the issue of American complicity in the Holocaust, it is essential—especially when the author has valid and important things to say—to get the facts and contexts right.

Steven Katz
Cornell and Yeshiva Universities

Perl replies:

The brunt of Professor Katz's critique is not directed toward the subject matter of "Paradise Denied", which he minimizes. His concern is a prematurely negative interpretation of Nazi aims based in the claim that my essay uses "too casually bits of information."

Calling Hitler's announced intention of "annihilating the Jewish race in Europe" in his Reichstag speech on January 30, 1939 just a "bit of information" is almost frivolous.

And the claim that the policy of genocide had not been put into an actual plan is disproved by the formation, in the summer of 1939, of the *Einsatzgruppen* with the special assignment of mass-murdering Jews. In the first months of the war, their training months, they massacred 6,503 Polish Jews. The plan was activated in 1939, and brought to fruition with the development of gas chamber technology.

Premature Verdict?

ADAM GARFINKLE WAS proved wrong even before your last issue arrived in the mail ("Into the Shooting Gallery", Winter 1995/6). Bosnia did not become a "shooting gallery", and peacekeeping took place with little local resistance. Do you suppose Mr. Garfinkle would care to explain why he erred so badly? Missing in his angry blast is any analysis of the situation on the ground.

Specifically, he should look at the Croatian retaking of Western Slavonia in March 1995 and of Krajina in August 1995, essentially without a fight. Why? Only one explanation fits: Milosevic ordered the local Serb militias, whose officers work for and answer to Belgrade, to withdraw. Why would he do that? Because he knew Serbia was weakening, he was overextended and Croatia had acquired heavy weapons (tanks and artillery). Accordingly, the two main antagonists had reached a rough military equilibrium, and that made Dayton possible and NATO/U.S. intervention feasible.

Got a better explanation?

Michael Roskin
Lycoming College

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Garfinkle replies:

Michael Roskin says, in a letter dated December 26, that I was proven wrong about peacekeeping in Bosnia even before he received the last issue of *The National Interest*. This is an astonishing conclusion, for December 26, 1995 is also the day that the first operational U.S. forces crossed the Sava River into Bosnia and set up a tent or two. I had thought it clear that my concerns about American troops in Bosnia—and the future of NATO with them—referred to the entirety of their prospective yearly stay, not just to the first day!

Students at Lycoming College certainly are lucky to have a teacher who is sure about how complex political and diplomatic struggles will end up before they've barely begun. □

KOHL ON FIRE

[T]he policy of European integration is in reality a question of war and peace in the twenty-first century. My deceased friend François Mitterrand shared this view. He stated before the European Parliament in Strasbourg on January 17, 1995 that nationalism is war.

I know that some people do not like to hear this. My warnings may contain an unpleasant truth. However, it is no use burying one's head in the sand. If there is no momentum for continued integration this will not only lead to standstill but also to retrogression. But we have no desire to return to the nation-state of old. It cannot solve the great problems of the twenty-first century. Nationalism has brought great suffering to our continent—just think of the first fifty years of this century. . . .

In my view, reason dictates that we Germans keep in mind how our neighbors see us. Even today this image is marked by historical burdens, as well as the economic power and size of the population of united Germany. It is in our very own interests that we dispel distrust and act as a reliable partner. For Germany to pursue a foreign policy not committed to the principles and objectives of European integration would be irresponsible. . . .

During the next few years we will have to prove that a viable Europe can be built with fifteen and more states. At the same time, however, the slowest ship in the convoy should not be allowed to determine its speed. If individual partners are not prepared or able to participate in certain steps towards integration the others should not be denied the opportunity to move forward and develop increased cooperation in which all partners are welcome to take part.

—Chancellor Helmut Kohl
from a speech given at the University of Louvain, Brussels, February 2, 1996.

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DOUSING KOHL

I am beginning to form the impression that Chancellor Kohl of Germany is not an attentive reader of *The Sunday Telegraph*. In his hysterical "unite or fight" speech in Brussels on Friday he once again implicitly attacked Britain's role in the European Union with the assertion that "the slowest ship in the convoy should not be allowed to determine its speed." As *The Sunday Telegraph* reader Captain P.E.I. Bailey RN (Ret.) pointed out in a letter last December, when Kohl first advanced his nautical metaphor, "the whole essence of the convoy is that the speed of the convoy is dictated by the slowest ship."

Captain Bailey further expressed the view that memories of Germany's skilful use of its U-Boats during the last war should have prevented the German Chancellor from committing such a solecism.

You might have thought that Captain Bailey was being a bit harsh to bring the last war into all this, but as it turned out he was right on the Chancellor's wavelength. In his Brussels speech on Friday Kohl made the specific threat that the alternative to the European Political and Monetary Union was war: "European Integration is in reality a question of war and peace." And he went on to cite his country's two invasions of his hosts as a portent of what could happen in a non-federal Europe. Or in other words, Kohl seemed to be saying to poor little Belgium, "Unite with us, or we might be so stupid as to invade you a third time."

It might seem as though the German Chancellor has been driven deranged by the collapse of his pan-European dream, as the Maastricht convergence criteria are ever more widely ignored and ridiculed. In fact the argument that the alternative to full European Union is European conflict was always the source of the passionate federalist advocacy of men such as François Mitterrand, and Edward Heath. Now Kohl is the only big political player old enough to be tormented by personal memories of the last war, and to be driven by those demons. But the fact that this ruling passion is psychologically understandable does not make it reasonable. . . .

—Dominic Lawson
The Sunday Telegraph (London), February 4, 1996

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Pat's World

Owen Harries

UNTIL NOW, AND the question of trade apart, foreign policy has not figured much in the Republican presidential primaries. But with Pat Buchanan setting the pace and tone, it is certain that it will do so before long. For he has strong and contentious views on the subject.

As it happens, the most extended and coherent statement of those views appeared in *The National Interest*. A few years ago, Mr. Buchanan, along with fifteen others, contributed essays to our symposium on what America's purpose should be in a post-Cold War world.[1] His was a characteristically pungent and robust piece, showing an impressive familiarity with both American history and international politics, and it drew on a wide range of opinions—John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson, Byron and Macaulay, Acheson and Lippmann and Tuchman—to support its arguments. All in all, it is doubtful whether any practicing politician of national stature other than Senator Moynihan could produce as assured an essay with his own pen. (Senator Lugar's much touted mastery of the subject seems to consist mainly of a close acquaintanceship with the conventional wisdom, and he doesn't write particularly well.)

Given his temperament, it is not surprising that Buchanan approaches the question of national purpose largely by tearing into those he believes to be in error on the subject. The concept of national purpose, he says, "has become a vessel, emptied of its original content, into which ideologues of all shades and hues are invited to pour their own causes, their own visions." Extra-national ideals have been substituted for the national interest, and the Republic has been treated as a means to some supposedly larger end, rather than an end in itself.

He proceeds to spell out the kind of things he has in mind. While the United States had no option but to fight the Cold War ("You can refuse almost any invitation, but when a man wants to fight, you have to oblige him"), now that it is over we should not "defend wealthy nations that refuse to defend themselves." He advocates the complete withdrawal of U.S. troops from Europe and the Asian mainland, and the uprooting of the global network of "trip-wires" that was established during the Cold War. In the post-Cold War world, "our role is diplomatic and moral, not military", and NATO should be left either to wither on the vine or to become a purely European organization.

Nor should the United States allow its purpose to be defined by the "guilt-and-pity crowd" that would exploit American altruism

Owen Harries is editor of *The National Interest*.

[1]Patrick J. Buchanan, "America First, Second and Third", *The National Interest* (Spring 1990). The symposium was subsequently published as a book: Owen Harries, ed., *America's Purpose: New Visions of U.S. Foreign Policy* (San Francisco: ICS Press, 1991).

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to make us responsible for mending the ills of the world. Foreign aid is an idea whose time has passed and the spigot should now be turned off. (Interestingly, Buchanan does not on this occasion attack the United Nations, the IMF, and other international institutions, though he does pause to characterize one proposal as likely to "set off onanistic rejoicing inside the Trilateral Commission." The World Trade Organization did not yet exist at the time he wrote.)

Buchanan also delivers a powerful polemic against those who represent "the democratist temptation", and who argue that a crusade to "wage democracy" throughout the world should be America's central purpose (a group that was more vocal in the heady days of 1990 than it is today). Buchanan will have none of it: "Like all idolatries, democratization substitutes a false God for the real, a love of process for love of country." For, he maintains, that is all that democracy is—a process for choosing rulers that says nothing about whether those rulers will be wise or good. Raúl Alfonsín, an elected president, led Argentina to ruin; General Pinochet, who seized power in a coup, set Chile on the road to prosperity and freedom. In any case, "how other people rule themselves is their own business. To call it a vital interest of the United States is a formula for interminable meddling and endless conflict."

With the ground thus cleared, Buchanan proceeds to give his own opinion as to how the question at issue should be answered. "A nation's purpose", he insists, "is discovered not by consulting ideologies, but by reviewing its history, by searching the hearts of its people. What is it for which Americans have always been willing to fight?" That is the simple and fundamental test of the nation's highest purpose, and anything that fails it—anything for which Americans will *not* fight—must be rejected. What, then, does Buchanan believe his fellow countrymen *will* fight for? The answer, it turns out, has actually already been given at the very beginning of his essay, in a sentence, that on first reading, could easily be dismissed as a preliminary rhetorical flourish:

> On the birthday of Thomas Jefferson, dead half a decade, the president of the United States raised his glass and gave us, in a six-word toast, our national purpose: 'The Union', Old Hickory said, 'it must be preserved.'

The purpose of the United States, then, is its own preservation; nothing more.

THE SENSIBILITIES OF the Wilsonians among us set aside for the moment, there is much in the view of American foreign policy outlined above that will make many realists feel very uneasy. It will make them uneasy not because it conflicts sharply and obviously with what they believe, but because it is in many ways so similar, so close to their views—and yet so different in some essential respects.

Consider first the similarities. Buchanan, like any realist, bases foreign policy firmly on the foundation of the self-interest of his country. In an anarchic world, realists believe, nothing else makes sense. Realists also agree with Buchanan substantially in his rejection of idealistic crusades and altruism as unsound and often dangerous bases for a country's foreign policy, and tend to share his skepticism (though not his conspiratorial view) of supranational organizations. Again, Buchanan, along with all realists, is fully appreciative of the indispensability of power—and the crucial importance of relative power—in the pursuit of foreign policy goals. Even as he advocates withdrawal from Europe and Asia, he insists that "America should use her economic and technological superiority to keep herself permanent mistress of the seas, first in air power, first in space", and it is only in the case of the ground troops required for overseas expeditions that he is prepared to economize. Even what may properly be termed Buchanan's neo-isolationism has some affinities with the minimalist realism that Christopher Layne

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describes and advocates in this issue. Indeed, in the post-Cold War debate on foreign policy, many of realism's critics have insisted on treating the two as identical, and the labels as interchangeable.

But there are critical differences as well as similarities. The foreign policy views of realists derive from an appreciation of the fundamental importance of the anarchic state of the international society of states, and/or from certain unflattering conclusions about human nature. More particularly, they involve a close and rational analysis of circumstances, of costs and benefits, ends and means, alternative possibilities. It was in that way—by a careful and dispassionate consideration of interests, resources, and political environment—that George Washington and his colleagues originally arrived at their policy of isolationism in a very different world from today's, and that was truly a realist policy.

Buchanan, on the contrary, insists that the only way to arrive at a sound policy is to look inward, to consult the instincts and feelings—to "search the hearts"—of the American people, or to look backward, to consult America's history. It is not the condition of the world but the condition of Americans, not human nature but American nature, not today's international circumstances but the nation's past experience that are the decisive considerations for him. If the conclusions reached by these two utterly different processes occasionally coincide, it will be by pure accident. Buchanan's isolationism has more affinity with the emotional rejection of Europe by nineteenth-century immigrants than it has with Washington's cool decision in favor of "no entangling alliances." Given the importance he attaches to loyalty as a value, if Buchanan had been calling the shots in 1793 he would almost certainly have committed American power on the French side of the European war, in gratitude for the indispensable support that France had given the Americans in the Revolutionary War.

There are other differences. Realists are concerned to emphasize how the predicament and behavior of all states are fundamentally similar—it is what gives them the confidence to generalize and formulate their rules and "laws." Buchanan on the other hand affirms and extols American exceptionalism. Indeed, so exceptional is his America that even as he preaches its disengagement and withdrawal from the world, he insists that it is also "uniquely situated to lead the world. . . . The twenty-first century will also be the American century." While he does not elaborate on the direction in which America will lead, his comparison of the size, wealth, and military strength of the United States and its nearest rivals makes it clear that he has more in mind than mere moral example or civilizational pull. So we are left with the confusing image of a United States that simultaneously stands apart and leads.

Appeals to the wishes or beliefs of "the American people", routinely made by presidential candidates (and presidents), are dubious at the best of times. They presuppose a unity and solidarity of will that simply does not exist. All peoples, and the American people more than most, are characterized by internal diversity, variety, competition, and conflict. That being so, an alleged commitment to "search the hearts" of the American people for an answer to the question of America's purpose boils down to one of two things: either the banal process of consulting the polls to see what people say about their beliefs and then going with the results (the preferred option of most run-of-the-mill politicians); or the presumption of a special competence to divine and interpret the *true* will of the people, in Rousseauean fashion. What we know about Pat Buchanan suggests that he would scorn the first course (rightly) but that he would find the second to be highly congenial—and what we have experienced in this century of populist dictators who claim to have unique understanding of the soul of the people they govern and a unique capacity to interpret the real meaning of their history suggests that the results would be unpleasant and dangerous.

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When Buchanan speaks of the American people it is clear that he does not have in mind *all* the people who live in America, or even all the people who *legally* live here and are citizens. Rather, he presumes the existence of an essential and elect American people, one that for him represents spiritual authenticity and historical continuity—a people composed overwhelmingly if not exclusively of Anglo-Saxons and Celts and Christians. (How else to interpret Buchanan's mantra about "taking our country back"? Who is it that the "our" covers? And from whom is it to be taken back?) Presumably, it is only the hearts of this elect that are to be searched for America's true purpose.

Resting as it would be on the incompatible pillars of isolationism, realism, populism, and romantic American exceptionalism, a Buchananesque "foreign policy of the heart"—really of his own passionate but resentful heart—would be erratic and dangerous. It might start out as an isolationist foreign policy, but given his pugnacious temper, as well as his genuine concern for America's dignity and honor as he interprets them, it would be the easiest thing in the world for an adversary to taunt and goad him out of that isolation—or, indeed, for a well-meaning but insufficiently sensitive state, or even an unprovoked spontaneous emotional spasm, to have the same effect. And, after that, who knows where we might end up? Probably in several wars—for remember, "when a man wants to fight"—or when you think he wants to fight—"you have to oblige him."

A Post-Script

ALL THAT SAID, there is no need to demonize Pat Buchanan or to treat him as unspeakable. While many of his views are indeed repugnant (and those on the Nazi regime and the Holocaust especially so), it is worth bearing in mind that any Caucasian who is over, say, forty-five today probably had a father who, to a greater or lesser degree, held some if not most of those views—not in his dotage but in his prime, and not only in the United States but in countries like Great Britain and Australia as well. Support for racial segregation, at least a mild form of anti-semitism, abhorrence of homosexuality, opposition to abortion, xenophobia, condescension towards women—all these were among the "smelly orthodoxies" of Caucasian life at every level, as recently as the 1950s. After all, several of them found expression in the law of the day. It is worth recalling that when one such law was finally changed in the 1950s and the federal government was obliged to send troops to Little Rock to enforce desegregation, Dwight Eisenhower—the nearest thing to the father of the whole nation at that time—was at pains to explain that he was doing so to enforce the law, and he pointedly refrained from making known his opinion on the substantive issue of segregation.

Those of us who do not think of our parents as moral monsters would do well to bear all this in mind before deciding to apply the word "evil" to Patrick Buchanan. □

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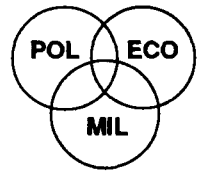

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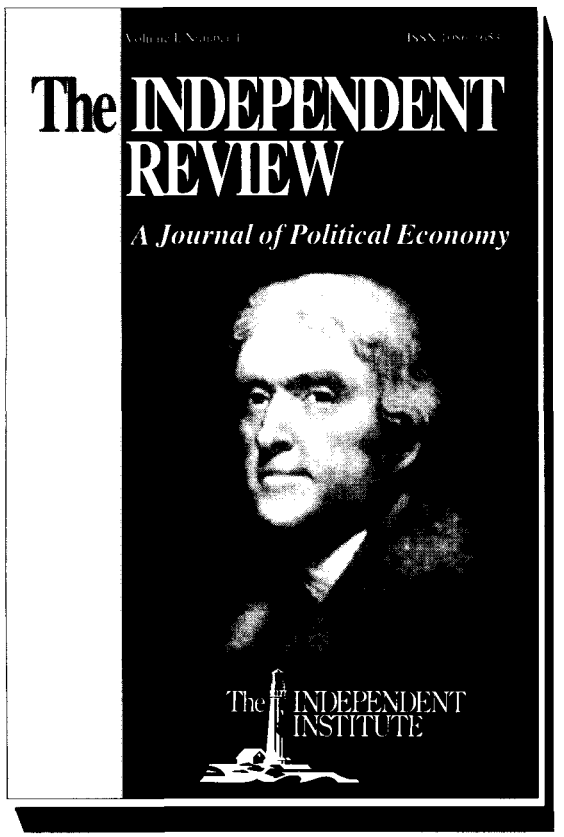

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